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VARIOUS OPINIONS
OF THE
PHILOSOPHICAL REFORMERS
CONSIDERED;

PARTICULARLY
PAIN'S RIGHTS OF MAN;

BY
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THE
RIGHTS OF MAN
CONSIDERED.

MODERN philosophy has evidently its tendency to produce the most baneful effects on society. Its object is first to annihilate every thing that is social, to dissolve all those ties and connections which hitherto have linked men together, and which have hindered them from preying upon each other; and out of the chaotic dissolution to introduce a new system and order of things, by which wonders the most absurd and the most impossible are to be brought to pass, by which all the wisdom of mankind, from the beginning of the creation to the present day, is to be considered as folly, and all the folly which conceit can be the parent of is to be established in its room. All are to be free; there is to be no slavery; and yet in the constitution of the world, which the impotent efforts of these worthies cannot alter, we see it is ordained otherwise. All are to be equal,

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which at the same time we know, except man has a new nature given him, cannot be: but, notwithstanding the equality, still there is to be power in the world; and, to complete the admirable excellence of the system, the power is to be derived from those who are to be the subjects of it; that is, who are not in possession of the power which is to be derived from them. The author of a publication, entitled, “The Rights of Man,” has given us pretty much in detail the opinions of modern philosophers, and he has given them in a language which is sufficiently vulgar, virulent, and scurrilous. His pamphlet is written, as he informs us, in professed opposition to Mr. Burke’s Letter, and it operates with just as much force against that admirable performance as the pecking of a beetle does against a rock of adamant. It may serve with a variety of other performances of a similar tendency to be hung like trophies hereafter around the tomb of Mr. Burke; emblems of the poverty of the heads, the jejuneness of the spirits, and the malignity of the hearts of those who wrote them.

With regard to the notice which is taken of Mr. Pain in the following pages, the
reader

reader perhaps will think it more than his merit, either as a reasoner or a writer, has any title to; and so probably it would be if a club of men, who call themselves the Constitutional Society, had not attempted to give it a consequence which intrinsically it hath not. They have recommended it by an advertisement in the following very strong terms.—“ At a meeting of a society for constitutional information, held Wednesday, March 23d, 1791 :

Resolved, That the thanks of this society be given to Mr. THOMAS PAIN for his most masterly book, entitled the RIGHTS of MAN, in which not only the malevolent sophisms of hireling scribblers are detected and exposed to merited ridicule, but many of the most important and beneficial truths are stated in a manner so irresistably convincing as to promise the acceleration of that not very far distant period when usurping borough-sellers, and profligate borough-buyers, shall be deprived of what they impudently choose to call their property—the choice of the representatives of the people.—The Constitutional Society cannot help expressing their satisfaction that so valuable a publication has proceeded

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from

from a member of that society. And they sincerely hope that the people of England will give that attention to the subjects discussed in Mr. Pain's treatise, which their manifest importance so justly deserves.

Resolved, That the foregoing resolution, and all future proceedings of this society, be regularly transmitted by the secretary to all our corresponding constitutional societies in England, Scotland, and France.

DANIEL ADAMS, Secretary."

These terms of recommendation are undoubtedly very strong, and are defective only in that they are not likewise very just. But just they most assuredly are not, as will soon be seen when we have pointed out how miserably deficient this most masterly performance is in its reasoning, and how miserably mistaken this self-constituted society is in its judgment. At the very first outset of his work Mr. Pain stumbles. In answer to Dr. Price, Mr. Burke had most truly said, that by *the principles of the revolution*, the people of England had not acquired a right of choosing their own governors, of cashiering them for misconduct, and of framing a government
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for themselves; and in order to prove this, he had referred to the acts of parliament of those days, whereby any such right is absolutely disclaimed; any objection, therefore, to this answer of Mr. Burke's ought to have gone to the proof, that either the acts of parliament were falsely referred to, or that they were not truly interpreted. But instead of this, away goes Mr. Pain, in a kind of whirlwind, to prove what made no part of Mr. Burke's argument. "That there never did, there never will, there never can, exist a parliament, or any description of men, or any generation of men, in any country, possessed of the right or the power of binding and controlling posterity to the end of time." What hath all this to do with the question in dispute, which, on Dr. Price's part, was that by *the principles of the revolution* the people of England had acquired; and on Mr. Burke's, that by *the principles of the revolution* they had not acquired the rights specified by Dr. Price? Does Mr. Pain, or do his abettors, the Constitutional Society, acknowledge the truth of Dr. Price's position? Could any right be acquired to the people of the present day by the transactions of a parliament an hundred

years since. If a right could be acquired for us, a right could be renounced for us; and if it could not be renounced, neither could it be acquired. But Dr. Price says a right was acquired, and he lays claim to it in the name of the people of England; therefore Dr. Price acknowledges the very thing which Mr. Pain so furiously opposes, when he says, page 117, the parliament or people of 1688 had no right to bind or controul the people of the present *day in any shape whatever*.

But let us consider this matter a little; let us consider whether the acts of preceding times can operate so as to influence posterity; and for this purpose, we are to inquire what is the posterity of a nation, and at what instant it first begins to be reckoned. If by posterity are meant the persons who are born into the world after the framing of the acts, there is a posterity begun instantly as soon as the acts are framed; for many then die, and many then are born. If posterity is then said to be reckoned, when all the persons concerned in framing the acts, and all who were alive at the time they were framed, are dead, then we shall have a double kind of posterity: a posterity operated upon, and a posterity

posterity exempt from, the operation of the legislative acts; a posterity operated upon, because they happened to come into the world before the entire decease of the legislature; and a posterity not operated upon, because it happened not to exist till after its entire decease. Now if the former may be bound by the acts of the legislature, and this they certainly may, and it is a fact that they certainly are, in like manner may the latter: the one being as much and as truly a posterity as the other. Therefore the acts of the legislature may bind posterity, and in fact no acts of the legislature can or do operate at all without either in a greater or less degree binding posterity. The Constitutional Society deceive themselves, and wish to deceive others, when they patronize and circulate the unfounded and illiberal nonsense of Mr. Pain; for nonsense it most assuredly is to consider laws as binding only for the present moment. Both he and they too come to the consideration of this great political question with the narrow contracted minds of persons who cannot extend their ideas beyond A and B. They either forget or have no comprehension of what a nation is, and there-

fore they argue as if, like an individual, it was subject to decease. But a nation is not subject to decease by the flow and change of its individuals any more than a river is by the flow and change of its waters : *ille labitur et labetur in omne volubilis ævum*; and notwithstanding the continued flow of its stream, still remaineth to be the same river; and so also doth the nation which, by its continuity, in strict propriety, can have no posterity. A posterior time of the nation there may be, and there necessarily is; but a posterior nation, while the nation continues to be, the same is a manifest absurdity.

“ When a man ceases to be (saith the author of the pamphlet), his power and his wants cease with him; and having no longer any participation in the concerns of this world, he has no longer any authority in directing who shall be its governors, or how its government shall be organized, or how administered.” And again, p. 13, “ What rule or principle can be laid down that two non-entities, the one out of existence, and the other not in, and who never can meet in this world, that the one should controul the other to the end of time ?”—Here evidently
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this good man is thinking of the two individuals, John and Thomas, the one dead before the other was born, and consequently incapable of acting upon him. What miserable work is this ! What hath this to do with the English nation ? Hath the English nation at any period between the present time and the revolution ceased to be, or become a nonentity ? It was the English nation which made the law, and consented to and approved of it, for the purpose of binding the English nation, that is, itself to the end of time, or till it should cease to be ; but the English nation continueth to be, and to exist as it existed at the revolution ; and therefore the laws made at that period for binding the English nation to the end of time, are as binding now as they were then, and will continue to be as binding till the nation itself becomes a nonentity. At the revolution the nation saw itself arrived at that long wished-for period, when the structure of its constitution, which had been the venerable work of ages, had obtained its completion. Here therefore it took up its rest, and resolving its perpetuity, it bound itself to support and maintain the admirable structure to the
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end of Time. This was not, according to the idle dream of Thomas Pain, the act of a nonentity binding a nonentity; but the act of a great characteristic body binding itself through all the successions of times to which by necessity it would be subjected. And if the act of an individual binding himself to maintain a structure during the term of his natural existence is valid, valid likewise must be the act of a great nation binding itself for the term of its national existence; and as its national existence hath not as yet ceased, but still continues, therefore, in defiance of Thomas Pain and his abettors, the Constitutional Society, every man who is not an idiot will acknowledge, that the laws made for the permanent establishment and preservation of the constitution are as truly, as rightfully, and as perpetually binding upon us now, and henceforward for ever, as they were at the first moment of their being framed.

It is the grand error of Mr. Pain, and it runs through almost the whole of his performance, that he confounds the idea of a national with that of an individual existence. The individual John, after he is dead, certainly

tainly cannot do any thing to bind Thomas, who is not as yet born into the world; and if the nation died as the individual John does, neither could the nation do any thing to bind a future nation which should arise after its decease. But if the nation died which consented to and approved of the national acknowledgment at the revolution, when and what was the moment of its decease? Will the Constitutional Society be pleased to point out to us this moment? For till they do, Mr. Pain's publication, and their approbation of it, are all in vain.

Carrying on the same blunder into his thoughts, concerning an hereditary succession to government, p. 134, Mr. Pain says, there are two distinct heads, under which an hereditary succession to the government of a nation may be considered. The first is, "The right of a particular family to establish itself;" the second, "The right of a nation to establish a particular family." The first of these he reprobates as despotism; and of the second he thus expresses himself:—"But the second head, that of a nation establishing a particular family *with hereditary powers*, does not present itself as despotism
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on the first reflection. But if men will permit a second reflection to take place, and carry that reflection forward but one remove out of their own persons to that of their offspring, they will then see that hereditary succession becomes in its consequences the same despotism to others which they reprobated for themselves." Here we see again he wanders from the national to the individual character. On a first reflection he acknowledges the right of a nation in establishing a particular family with hereditary rights not to be despotism; but in his second reflection, whereby he would make it to be despotism, he bids adieu to the nation, and introduces John and Thomas again, with their offspring. But the question relates to the nation, and not to individuals: the question is, whether it is despotism to the nation? If it is, it is despotism in the first instance, which he acknowledges it is not, and therefore it cannot be in his second instance, because a nation cannot be the offspring of itself. America may be the offspring of the English nation (and a very undutiful one it has proved), but the English nation cannot be its own offspring; therefore Mr. Pain argues
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with inexcusable absurdity. Instead of the words "But if men will permit a second reflection," he should have said, "But if *the nation* will permit a second reflection to take place, and carry that reflection forward but one remove out of itself to that of its offspring, it would then see that hereditary succession becomes in its consequences the same despotism to its offspring which it reprobated for itself." But had he written thus it would not have applied in any respect; and his second reflection, instead of proving what he aims at, would only have proved the insufficiency and fallacy of his own argument.

The right of a nation to establish for itself a particular family with hereditary powers, the man acknowledges; therefore, so long as *itself* continues to have an existence, that particular family is established; and this likewise he ought to acknowledge, if he would argue truly. But truth of argument, through some defect or other, he seems to be a stranger to. The nation, which is the aggregate of generations in continuity, he supposes to be simply a particular generation; and therefore, when he ought to use the word
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nation, he substitutes in the room of it generation; and applying to the former what belongs only to the latter, he leads the reader through all the changes of wills, testaments, and I know not what besides.

A generation, we all know, is subject to decess, and to be succeeded; and the succeeding generation of a man may be operated upon by the will or testament of the preceding: but what hath this to do with the nation, whose character is that it is the aggregate of generations, and which cannot lose that character, until all the generations which are of its essence cease to be? The national character or existence doth not descend, as by a will or bequest, to a succeeding generation, but it remains and continues, without any descent, through all the various flow of generations. It was the English nation an hundred years ago, and it will be the English nation an hundred years hence, if the flow of generations continues; and therefore, to argue, as this writer doth, from the right of a particular generation to the right of a nation, is ridiculously foolish and absurd in the extreme.

Page 137, he says, " In whatever light
hereditary

hereditary succession, as growing out of the will and testament of some former generation, presents itself, it is an absurdity. A cannot make a will to take from B the property of B and give it to C. Yet this is the manner in which (what is called) hereditary succession by law operates." But hereditary succession does not grow out of the will or testament of some former generation, or out of the will of any generation at all: it is the fixt, permanent establishment of the nation for itself during its own existence, and for the term of its own existence. If hereditary succession proceeds from a will or testament, by necessity the death of the testator must have taken place before it could have its effect; for a most assured truth it is, that no testament is of force while the testator liveth. Now in this case, who was the testator? Mr. Pain says it was a former generation, and yet we all know, in the establishment of an hereditary succession, no testator at all was concerned; it was a national act in its national character; and the former generation, by which Mr. Pain deceives himself, was nothing more than the organ, the instrument whereby this national act was effected;

fectcd ; and whether that generation lived or died, was of no manner of consequence, because the establishment of the hereditary succession at the revolution was not the act of any particular generation, but of the nation in its characteristic and national capacity. The English nation is the universal body of the people of England in all its generations and existence ; and an act of the English nation binding itself for ever is an act binding it through all its generations and existence, and the manifestation of this act must be either by the personal appearance and acknowledgment of the universal body of the people, a case which I believe never yet has happened, or the manifestation of it must be by the people's proper and constitutional representatives. Thus it was at the revolution. The act relative to the settlement of the crown, and hereditary succession to it, in the Protestant line was established by the proper and constitutional representatives of the people: the nation acquiesced in that establishment, and thereby made it its own act as much as if the universal body of the people had personally consented to and approved of it.

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If it should be said that by this acquiescence the nation made it its own act for that time, but not beyond it, it will be necessary that the objector should specify for what time; whether for an hour, a day, or for years, and for what number of years, and when he has or can do this, it will be time enough to give an answer to the objection: however, to satisfy us that there is no deception in the tendency of the preceding arguments, let us attend to what follows.

A nation is the universal body of people in the flow of its generations; and the succeeding generations are as much of the essence of the nation as the preceding: for at no two instants of time does the nation consist of the same specific generations. By births and deaths they vary every instant. Therefore every national act, if it operates at all, doth, by necessity in its operations, extend beyond that particular generation to which those appertained who were the organs or instruments of giving the national sanction to such act; and if it doth operate beyond that generation, when is it to stop? where is the line beyond which its operation is not to extend? and who is to draw this line, if the nation itself hath not drawn it?

In acts to be in force for a definite time, for 21 years we will say, the nation itself draws the line. In acts for an indefinite time, no line is drawn; such acts may cease or continue, as the nation shall think proper; but in acts made to be perpetual, such acts only then cease to be of force when the nation itself ceases to have existence; in which last instance there neither is any injustice, nor any improper exertion of power, any more than there is in the first instance. In both instances the acts reach into more generations than one, and there is no other difference between them, than what consists in the greater or less number of generations affected by them. In an act of the nation, binding for one and twenty years, there is the same injustice (if indeed there is any injustice in the case) as in one that binds for an hundred years, or for ever. In both cases men are bound who were not in existence when the act was made: therefore in both cases there is equal justice, and as any individual man, whose body we are told never remaineth the same for four and twenty hours together, may bind himself for the term of his natural life, so likewise may the nation, which by
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the flow and change of its generations never consisteth for any two instants of the same individuals, bind itself for the term of its national existence; and against this there is nothing to be opposed but the madness of modern philosophers, and the folly, and perhaps worse of modern clubs.

Mr. Pain, in his declamation against hereditary rights and hereditary succession, is pleased to tell us, that he heard the then Earl of Shelburne in the House of Lords speak words to the following purport: "*That the form of a government was a matter wholly at the will of a nation at all times; that if it chose a monarchial form, it had a right to have it so; and if it afterwards chose to be a republic, it had a right to be a republic, and to say to a king, We have no longer any occasion for you.*" Here then words are put into the mouth of this noble Peer, which most assuredly never could have been spoken by him. We may all of us have heard his Lordship extolled for his wisdom, for his honesty, and lack of duplicity, and for his being destitute of that pride which is too nearly allied to meanness not to be most contemptible; but who ever esteemed his Lordship to be a fool, an idiot, a driveller? and there-

fore such a speech as this never could have proceeded from the Earl of Shelburne, whom we all know not to be a fool: we will therefore take it for granted that it is the sportive product only of Mr. Thomas Pain's own invention, and as such we will consider it.

That men have a right, when destitute of any government, to choose for themselves what form they will establish and live under, I apprehend none will dispute. Therefore, if a body of men at any time find themselves in a country, no matter how all independent of each other, without any rule or controul over them, as they are by the laws of God and nature bound to establish some form of government for the conduct of themselves, so likewise are they at liberty to choose what that form shall be. Here then we will say, in exercise of this right, they determine upon a monarchy which they establish with an hereditary succession. Now in this case the right having been exercised by a choice being made, the right in future becomes suspended, and in fact extinguished; for so long as the effect of their choice continues to be what they chose it to be, that is a monarchical form of government with hereditary

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tary succession, there remains no longer any choice to be made, and of course the right to choose becomes extinguished until the government they chose becomes extinct: when that happens, indeed their right revives again, but until it does happen, to talk of the people's right to choose under what form of government they will live, when the choice is already made and exists in all its energy, is no better than the idle reverie of an idiot in a dream.

But it is said, "The form of government is a matter wholly at the will of a nation at all times." It is false; and for this reason,—the choice is made, the will of the nation is already declared that it will be under a monarchy with an hereditary succession. The nation, therefore, is no longer as it was before, without any government and free to choose, but under a government, and consequently restrained in its choice by a voluntary act of its own. So that, instead of the form of government's being wholly at the will of a nation at all times when the choice is made, the form of government must be abided by, and never after is subject to the will of the nation.

It is said, that if a nation which had chosen a monarchical form of government “ afterwards chose to be a republic, it had a right to be a republic, and to say to a king, we have no longer any occasion for you;” the meaning of which idle stuff is, that as a nation has a right to establish a form of government when it has none, so it has a right to destroy a form of government when it has one. Here then let us consider what is the meaning of the words, “ having a right.” Man, as a free agent, has a right to act in every thing according to his own will, where there is no law against him, and therefore, when he is without a form of government, he has a right to choose under what form he will live, because there is no law restraining him in his choice, or obliging him to set up any one particular form preferably to another. When he acts, therefore, in this matter, and makes his choice, his right assuredly is most indisputable. So, in like manner, if he has a right to destroy an established form of government, he must have this right, because there is no law against him, restraining him from doing it; and in such a case his right will be equally indisputable as in the other. But it happens,
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most unfortunately for this right, all laws, divine and human, every where and at all times, are and have been against this right. It is a contradiction marked with the strongest and most flagrant degree of absurdity to say that a nation, after it hath established a government, hath a right to destroy it; for government in all its ideas implies obedience from those who are subjected to it; and if a nation hath chosen to subject itself to any particular government, it must by necessity be under the restraint and controul of that government; and, under its controul, it cannot act in any thing relative to it, but according to its established laws, and therefore it cannot have a right to destroy it. When a nation hath made its choice, it most assuredly hath not its choice to make; and if it hath made choice of a monarchical form of government with hereditary succession, it hath no right, and never can have right, to say to a king, We have no longer any occasion for you, and we will be a republic.

But for a moment let us suppose that the nation had the right which the present Marquis of Lansdown is said to have affirmed it had, and let us display a little the beauties

and prettineſſes of this right. The nation having a right to chooſe (as is before expreſſed) under what form of government it will live, makes choice of a monarchy, and after having for a little time experienced its effects begins to grow tired of it. The government ſhall not be a monarchy any longer, it ſhall be a republic, and ſo they ſend the king about his buſineſs as a perſon for whom they have no farther occaſion, and eſtabliſh a republic; by and by they become diſgusted with a republic, and determine upon having an ariſtocracy. Soon after the ariſtocracy does not pleaſe, and then they will have ſomething elſe; and ſo on through all the various changes that are poſſible in government. What a noble and illuſtrious idea does this give us of human wiſdom, and with what pomp and majeſty muſt a nation of men riſe before our eyes in all the ſplendor of changing and changing, and changing again! You may laugh, if you pleaſe, at the little wayward child which falls a crying becauſe it cannot pleaſe itſelf in the different arrangements of its toys; but infinitely more ridiculous would be ſuch a nation of men; and it ſeems to be almoſt impoſſible that the
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wife Marquis of Lansdown should have uttered such a speech as Mr. Pain has ascribed to him, so totally unbecoming the dignity of an English peer, and fit only to have been spoken by one escaped from an hospital of lunatics.

A nation or body of men, if without a form of government, may choose for itself what form it will establish; when that form is established, it is established to be the national government in a country: that is, to be the form by which the people inhabiting that particular country are to be governed. But if the government is established, and the people subjected to it, whence comes the idea, and how is it to be supported, that the government may be destroyed and changed at the will of the people? What a farrago of contradictions is there in this! The people have willed the establishment of a national government, and consequently that it shall not be destroyed, and yet by their will, which they have already disposed of by willing the contrary, it may be destroyed. They have willed their own subjection to it (and in subjection there can be no power over that to which a thing is subjected), yet strange beyond all possibility

possibility of comprehension, they have a power over that over which they have no power: they have a power of destroying and changing that government to whose power they have willed their own subjection. Is there any thing in Bedlam equal to the madness and folly of this? Yet such is the stuff adopted and circulated by the revolution and constitutional clubs, and their darling Thomas Paine, and his abettors; and such is the madness and folly of saying, "That the form of government is wholly at the will of a nation *at all times*," just as if government was a pack of cards in the hands of a child building houses with them, and pulling them down again. If we are men, let us act like men and not like children; and if we are reasonable creatures, let us hearken to the voice of reason, and treat with the contempt it deserves, that philosophy which hath deranged so many in their intellects, and hath taught them to discover form and figure in what is nothing but a shapeless mass of jumbled confusion. But it is time that we should proceed to consider some other of those principles which this most despicable philosophy is endeavouring to establish.

We will begin with the right of making peace and war. "The right of making war and peace, they say, is in the nation; for where else should it reside but in those who are to pay the expence?" Here then these men consider the subject with the spirit of a man who is going to the shambles to buy a joint of meat. Is the expence the whole and only subject to be attended to in making war and peace? Or does paying towards the expence qualify a man to judge of the propriety of making them? Some people will think just the contrary: for in common life we know many a man refuses to do what is right, and what he ought to do, for the sake of saving the expence, and thus entails upon himself costs and difficulties which otherwise he might have avoided. They who are to pay the expence are, generally speaking, the most improper persons that can be to judge in this case; they always have a bias upon their minds. The reason, the fitness, the necessity of a war, are matters which they never at all attend to: they are absorbed only in the consideration of the expence, which being a present evil they will avoid it, if they can, in defiance of all the probable evil consequences

quences which may arise from it afterwards.

War, with its attendant evils, is undoubtedly a most severe scourge, and were it to cease for ever, through the world, it were an event most devoutly to be wished. But the question is, in the present constitution of human nature, is it an event to be expected so long as lust and ambition, and evil passions, continue to rage within the bosoms of mankind? While men lust and desire to have, will they not endeavour to have? And will not wars and fightings be the necessary consequence of this endeavour? If they will, and surely no man will say they will not, the plausible pretence of our philosophers will be all at an end, when they say that placing the right of making war with those who are to pay the expence will be a means of banishing war for ever from off the face of the earth. Banish, if you can, men's evil lusts and passions, and we will say something to you; but while they remain, and continue to operate, it is not transferring the right of making war to those who are to pay the expence of it, that will cause wars to cease in all the world. But to the question.

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If cause for war arises, and cause for it certainly will arise, so long as human nature continues to be what it is at present, with whom should the right be placed of determining whether it ought to be entered upon or not; that is, to judge whether the cause is sufficient to justify a declaration of war?—Should it be placed with those who by necessity are partial, interested, and prejudiced? or with those who having no particular interest in the case, nor bias upon their minds, will most probably judge according to the soundest and best dictates of human wisdom, and without partiality? No man can hesitate in his answer to this, and therefore we will say the right of declaring war ought not to be with those whose minds are biased by self-interest and partiality. They who are to pay the expence of a war are necessarily biased by the self-interest which that expence occasions, therefore they will endeavour to proportion the justness of the cause for war to the measure of that self-interest, and consequently will either decide against it entirely, or else having their attention almost wholly engrossed by the expence, will cause it to be carried on with a spiritless penury, and of course
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without effect. It ought not therefore undoubtedly to be left to them who are to pay the expence of it, to decide upon the expediency of a declaration of war. To whom then ought it to be left? In every country, be the form of government what it will, the right of deciding on the expediency of a declaration of war ought to be with those in whose hands is the power of government; for government being, in its very essence, formed for the properest regulation and protection of the society over which it is constituted, hath no particular interests of its own to gratify, nor any but what are bound up in the interests of that society. Therefore, if the expence of a war will evidently prove more than a nation can support, it is not to be imagined that it will do otherwise than desist from it.

Government is to be considered as the medium between a nation and its enemies, either for the purpose of protection or mutual reconciliation. In protection it will use the means, and all the means, when necessary, with which the nation can supply it. The greatness of the expence, if it is not ruinously great, will be no hinderance or check

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to it in carrying it on. It has none of the little bias of private or self interest to divert it in its progress, and therefore will proceed steadily, with its eye fixed only upon the justice of the cause, and the end to be obtained. If the end can be obtained without war, government will then act as the medium of reconciliation between the nation and its enemy; and, inattentive to popular prejudices, or the tumult of faction, will effect, by the milder means of negotiation and treaty, what the fury of enraged minds would require should be exacted at the point only of the sword.

But it will be said, if the right of making war or peace resides in the government of a country, where that government is an arbitrary despotic monarchy, matters will by no means be conducted as here represented. In such a case, the will of the monarch will be the sole criterion of the expediency of a declaration of war; regard will be had neither to the justice of the cause for which the war is declared, nor to the magnitude of the expence attending it, but solely to the monarch's private ambition, which is to be gratified by it. Here then we must enter into a discussion
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which probably will not be agreeable to all palates. The reader, however, will be pleased to consider it merely as an allegation of facts, without entering at all into their merits either the one way or the other, or the inferences which may be drawn from them.

A despotic monarchy is said to be that where the will of one person only arbitrarily controls and disposes of millions of people at his own pleasure. But where either is, or hath been, such a monarchy ever found upon the earth, which *in fact* hath, or doth, dispose of the people at its own pleasure? In despotic countries, is not the very despotism founded in the laws of those countries? could it subsist without them? could any despot, by any individual power of his own, establish himself over millions of people, or compel them to bend to his yoke without their own consent? Where then is the despot that ever could dispose of millions of people at *his own* pleasure? he is no where to be found, and never existed any where but in the confused brains of wild theorists. The despot succeeds to his crown, and with the consent of the people, as truly and certainly as in an elective monarchy; and if he succeeds to it with
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more power, and less restraint upon him, than the elected monarch does, still how can he alone, at his own pleasure, exercise this greater power, except he is seconded and supported in it? Therefore his actions, be they what they may, proceed as much from the will and pleasure of those who support him, as from himself. Nominally, indeed, and for form sake, they are said to proceed solely from him; but his mind must have been framed in a very uncommon mould, who doth not know that the will of a despot, unsupported by his subjects, is no more than the will of a non-entity. By overloading the character of a despot with blood and cruelty, the character becomes such as neither doth or ever did exist *in rerum natura*. A despot certainly hath more power than other monarchs; but when he comes to exert that power, he must exert it as other monarchs do, with the strength of others; for if he attempts to exert it without that assistant strength, he necessarily falls a victim to the attempt. In despotic monarchies, the attempt, it must be acknowledged, hath been repeatedly made; but of what consists the history of such? It is the history of monarchs dethroned and murdered; for never

any despot, in his unjustifiable endeavours to stretch himself beyond his own line, ever succeeded in them, nor ever tyrannized over his subjects by the arbitrary exertion of his own solitary power, but it ended in his ruin. Much, very much more than is true, have we heard of the arbitrary power of kings. Kings are now held up to us as objects of the utmost abhorrence; as monsters, against whom every effort of mankind was to be exerted, in order to keep them fast bound in chains and fetters. But what tyranny of any king was ever equal to that of a tyrannical republic? The tyrannical and personal cruelty of a king can never reach beyond the extent of a very small circle, and that must necessarily be of but a very short duration; but the tyranny of the people has no limits to its extent, and baffles every effort to withstand it; and were a wise man to choose whether he would live under the tyranny of an arbitrary monarch or under the tyranny of a republic, he could not hesitate a moment in his choice. Against the evil effects of the former he might guard himself, but against the latter he would be without remedy, and the most guarded prudence would be in vain. Men are strangely
apt

apt to exclaim against the tyranny of kings, without suffering themselves to reflect wherein that tyranny consists. A king is but a single solitary individual man, and, generally speaking, with no more strength than is the common lot of other men: how then can he, alone, act the tyrant? If he acts the tyrant, it must be with the strength of others; but then the tyranny is in a much greater degree theirs, than it is his; and if he is nominally a tyrant, it is because he is at the head of a band of tyrants; for, in fact, a despotic tyranny is neither more nor less than a combination of the more numerous and more powerful part of the people, with a king at the head of them, against the fewer and weaker part, wherein the king is the ostensible tyrant; but the tyranny is effected by the other. Had a king a power and might of his own, independent, self-supported, requiring no other aid than that of his own arm, such an one indeed might justly become an object of dread and terror to us; for having a power all but divine, and a heart entirely human, the very worst of evils might be apprehended from him; and then indeed the tyranny would be

all his own. But as the world is constituted, it is very much the reverse.

The glory of a king is the glory of his people, and the ambition of a king, in its gratification, is the ambition of his people. Was the ambition of Louis XIV. merely his individual ambition? If it had been such, it never had been gratified. It was the ambition of the French people, who gratified their king for the purpose of gratifying themselves: his glory (such as it was) was theirs also, and they were as proud of their Grand Monarque as he possibly could be of their adulation, and as sensible of any disgrace which befel him as he himself could be. So that the outcry against kings as tyrants, is ridiculous. A king cannot be a tyrant without the people's becoming the voluntary executioners of his tyranny; neither can his ambition be of any kind of consequence, nor have any effect, except the people participate with him in it. Tarquin, we will own, was properly and personally a tyrant, but he was no otherwise so than any private man may be, and he paid dearly for it. Tyranny of government in a king must be where the laws and the people
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have made the king a tyrant; for otherwise, whatever may be his inclination, he cannot, it is not in his power, to be one. How could our Henry VIII. have been the tyrant he was, if the laws as they then were, and the people, had not supported him in his tyranny? Are the Turkish emperors tyrants by necessity, because they are emperors? By no means: they are tyrants because the constitution of their country has made them so; for emperors, assuredly, might be without tyranny. They, therefore, that talk of the pride, the ambition, the tyranny of kings, talk entirely at random. The pride and the ambition of kings is as personal in them as it is in any other individuals, and extends no farther, except where the laws and the community have given an extent to them; and in that case, the pride and ambition of kings become the pride and ambition of the community. Hence, when it is objected, that in despotic monarchies the right of making war and peace ought not to reside in the despot, because it will be made subservient to his pride and ambition; men reason fallaciously, and deceive themselves by confounding the pride and ambition of an unconnected indi-

vidual with that of the public character of a king, with which a whole community is connected. When a king wishes to extend his territories, and effects it, it may be we allow a gratification of his personal pride, that he is the lord of a greater extent of territory. But is this all? Are not his territories so much the more respectable by being extended, and do not his subjects share with him in a gratification of their pride also? They share with him in his pride, as they would also in his disgrace, were any unfortunate event to deprive him of a part of his dominions. The pride and ambition therefore of the despot, in his public character, is inseparable from the pride and ambition of his subjects. When Alexander overran the world, he was instigated to it, we will say, by his own private ambition; but then he was enabled to effect it by the equal and concurring ambition of the Macedonians, and by that alone; for when their ambition was sufficiently gratified, he was obliged to set bounds to his own, and to proceed no farther; which plainly shews that the pride and ambition of kings hath no farther effect than as it is supported by the concurring pride and ambition of the subject.

subject. The pride and ambition therefore of despotic princes is no reason why the right of declaring war should not reside in them.

Let not the language of despotic princes be urged against any thing that has been here said. The terms, "I command, It is my will," and the like, are terms put into their mouths by the laws of the country over which they preside, and of course are only common forms, and of no greater consequence than if they were to say, "I wish, It is my desire;" for a compliance with his wish or desire is as truly and certainly obedience to the monarch as a compliance with his will and command. If it be said, the despot uses other arrogant and assuming language, which cannot have its origin in the laws; let it be granted that he sometimes does, what will follow? Nothing but that his folly is superior to his arrogance. The language of despots is too often misinterpreted, and inferences are drawn from it which it will by no means justify. When Nero (I think it was) said, he wished the Roman people had all one neck, that he might execute his vengeance upon them at a single stroke, he was ex-

claimed against on account of the barbarous and inhuman cruelty of the wish; but whatever cruelty there might be in the wish, there was a much greater degree of folly and madness in it; for could he have effected it, what would have become of the emperor? When Nebuchadnezzar, in all the pride of his heart, said, "Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?" what was there in all this but the proud speech of a foolish man boasting of what he could not justify to be true, and the honour of whose majesty was presently after consigned by his subjects to take up its residence with the beasts of the field.

The pride and arrogance of any individual man is rarely if ever derived from his particular station in life. The pride is in his heart, and will be there in the most inferior as well as the most exalted state, without any other difference in the expression of it than what arises from the difference of that state. A man that is a king will express his pride in the style and language of royalty, because that is his state and condition; and the same man, had he been in an inferior condition,

condition, would have expressed the same pride of his heart in a style accommodated to that inferior condition. Pride is not by necessity inseparable from kingly power, because kings have been and may be humble: and they who are not so when they are kings, never would have been so had they not been kings: therefore, all the obloquy and abuse vented against regal power, on account of the pride and ambition which has and may be displayed by men that are kings, proceeds merely from ignorance and stupidity, for the pride is in the man; and if it was not in the man, it never would be in the king. But since we are upon the subject, let us suppose that the whole race of kings was exterminated, and that the very name was blotted out from all remembrance under heaven, what would be the consequence? The business of government must still be carried on; and as it must not be carried on by one man, it must be carried on by more than one man. Here then, instead of having to contend with the pride and ambition of one individual, we shall have to contend with the pride and ambition of perhaps a whole pandemonium; for, except you can
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prove that a democracy is by necessity destructive of all pride and ambition in the human heart; we shall have pride to contend with under a democratic as certainly as under a government by kings, and a pride that is infinitely more pernicious and persevering; for who is there that will not acknowledge it to be much more easy to persuade and prevail upon a single individual than upon many? The mind of the individual, having no other resources but what it finds within itself, may be overpowered, and yield to the voice of reason; and thus the swelling of a proud and ambitious heart may be entirely suppressed; but in a democracy it is totally otherwise. Like the waves of a disturbed ocean, the suppression of one wave only serves to make room for the elevation of another: when one voice is silenced another becomes exalted; and when reason and truth have operated to the conviction of one mind, others are all lost in the tumultuous babble of confusion. The abolition, therefore, of the regal power would gain nothing to us as a recompence, but an accumulation of hopeless evils.

The evils that would arise to us from the
abolition

abolition of kings, may be most strongly exemplified in the business of making war and peace: for as in this instance many minds must necessarily be consulted, and absolute unanimity is not to be expected: when they ought to be acting they would be debating; and when they should be offending or defending themselves against the approaches of the enemy, they would be arguing one with another whether they ought to do either, and thus perhaps bring upon themselves and their country irreparable mischief or ruin. An enemy could not wish a greater advantage over a people than to have their opposition to him depend upon their democratical resolves. He would always be certain of finding or prevailing upon some among them to be a friend to himself. Their resolves would always be known to him long before they could have an opportunity of putting them in execution; and thus he would be enabled to defeat all their best projected schemes, and to render them altogether ineffectual: whereas under the government of a wise king (and every king is wise who governs himself by the wisdom of experienced and faithful counsellors) every thing would be conducted with

secrecy

secrecy and dispatch ; nor would the enemy be able to discover, otherwise than by conjecture, any thing that was projected, until the moment of execution.

Upon this principle it is that, under the English constitution, the right of declaring war is vested in the crown. It is not vested there for the purpose of aggrandizing the crown, or of depressing the people, or of rendering them inconsequential ; but for the better and more effectual preservation of the people in their persons and properties, which would be greatly hazarded, perhaps entirely lost, if the business of the war was first to be submitted to the debates and harangues of declamatory demagogues. But let us suppose for a moment that the right was not in the crown, and that no war was to be declared until the minister had submitted the whole of the business to the determination of those who were to pay the expence ; the procedure then upon the occasion would most probably be in the following manner.

First, the minister must state precisely in all its parts what the facts were which called for a declaration of war. The facts being stated, debate of course would ensue, where-
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In it would be enquired whether, supposing the facts to be as they were stated, they were sufficient to justify a declaration of war; and if it was admitted that they were, then the question would be as to the authenticity of the facts; and if the authenticity of any them should depend, as most probably it would, upon secret though certain intelligence, the authors of it must be given up, and an unreserved display made of every circumstance belonging to it. Now what man is there so lost in his judgment as not to perceive the ruinous consequences that must necessarily attend such a procedure as this? But it might happen that the minister, from a principle of honour, would refuse to deliver up to public notoriety the persons from whom he received his intelligence. In that case, all the storm of public fury would fall upon himself, and he would be vilified and traduced as an impostor, who under false pretences wanted to levy taxes on the people, in order to answer some private purposes of his own, a war would be reprobated, no provision would be made for either defence or offence, and thus the enemy would have every advantage given him that he could possibly desire, and
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the country probably would be desolated, because the people chose to act, as the people almost always do act in such cases, that is, like fools and madmen.

They, therefore, who so loudly exclaim under the English constitution, that all measures antecedent and preparatory to a war ought to be explicitly submitted to the people who are to pay the expence, either are strangers to the true interests of their country, or wish not to promote them. A minister in England is responsible for his conduct; and when he involves his country in a ruinous and destructive war, without sufficient grounds to justify him in his conduct, by the acknowledgment of all parties, he is punishable. It is therefore at his own extreme peril if he enters upon an unjustifiable war; and therefore the people have all the security that self-interest can give them that he will not do it.

With the most consummate wisdom then, it is provided by the English constitution that the right of declaring war and peace should always and irrevocably reside in the crown. The people cannot be injured by this, for the persons employed by the crown are responsible for their conduct: but they would be
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most extremely injured if it were otherwise; for, under the tardiness and fluctuation of their resolves, the moment would be gone which might have ensured to them success. The public notoriety of their proceedings would defeat all the intentions of them, and proclaim, as with the sound of a trumpet, to the enemy what ought to have been most secret, and what he ought not to have known, till the instant of execution.

No one surely will say, in opposition to this, that if the right now resident in the crown was in the people, none of the evils mentioned would happen, for they would select a committee of two or three, or perhaps a dozen persons, with whom the whole business should be entrusted, which might be conducted with the same secrecy and success as it possibly could be under the crown. No one, I think, will urge this; for though it might be true, still what does it tend to prove? Not that the right ought to be in the people, but the contrary, that the right ought not to reside in the people, because if it did, they are incompetent to the exercise of it; they must surrender it to be exercised by others, to prevent the ruinous consequences

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quences that would be derived from its being exercised by themselves. But as this is the case, why object to the right being resident in the crown, when at the same time if it was to reside in the people, the people could not exercise it? Is not this the squalling of a little perverse brat, that wants to have in its own hand a weight which it hath not strength to hold? The most prominent feature in this philosophical age is childishness. It meets us in a variety of other instances besides that which has been now considered, and most glaringly in the abolition of titles, and the equalizing principle. Let us bestow a few thoughts upon this most ridiculous subject.

All men are equal, therefore there shall be no titles. But will all men be equal because there are no Dukes, Marquises, Viscounts, &c.? What do these philosophical things, for men they are hardly to be called, mean by the word equal? If they mean by it that all men are equally human creatures, it is true; the beggar hath a human existence equally with the grandee, and therefore in that respect, physically considered, the beggar is equal to the man of the highest rank

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or order, or even to a king that sitteth upon his throne, consequently titles of rank or order are no infringements of the *natural* equality of mankind; therefore the abolition of them cannot be in order to restore the natural equality of the human existence, which equality is just the same with or without titles; for what end then are they abolished? or what is the inequality which will be destroyed by their abolition? A duke, if he has no money, and is obliged to live by the solicitation of alms, has no superiority over any common beggar, who without a title does the same. What is Lady Betty in Scotland, if a chambermaid, the better for being a ladyship; or in what is his lordship, who holds your stirrup at an inn, superior to any common hostler? The title is not the cause that there is inequality among men, for a title, without a competent estate to support it, *vilius aliquid*; but the inequality that there is, and necessarily must be, amongst men, is the cause and parent of the title; and if there had not been that prior and necessary inequality, no man ever would have had a title to distinguish him from any other person.

In the human species there is no equality, other than what we may call the equality of the species; in every other respect almost inequality pervades the whole. Men they are all equally and truly, but in their strength, their powers of exertion, their bodily organs, their quickness or slowness of perception, their personal appearance, and the like, the most accurate observer is unable to produce any two men who are not *unequal* to each other, and who do not differ as the superior differs from the inferior; and differ they do, and will, notwithstanding every possible exertion for effecting the contrary. Throw, if it be possible, all the property of the world into one common storehouse, and let it be equally the property and for the use of every man in it, what will you have effected thereby? Not that equality which leaves no traces of superior or inferior, for one man will still be taller and more bulky than another, and consequently will require more to clothe him. One man will be more robust in his constitution than another, and of course will require more food for his sustenance. One man has greater strength, and

therefore will have greater individual power, as being able to effect by that strength what the weaker is altogether unequal to; therefore the language of philosophy, when it talks of the equality of men by nature, is in direct opposition to what is known to be truth and fact: for by nature men are unequal, and the intent of society is to compensate for this natural inequality, and to supply a remedy for the inconveniences and irregularities which otherwise might have proceeded from it. Hence in society power is given where nature had denied strength; and the vigour of an overbearing strength is curbed by the energies of subordination. It is one of the most pleasing beauties of society, that in it even the weakest of the human species is often exalted to bear rule over the mighty, and thereby is freed from that natural insignificance by which otherwise it would be trodden into the earth. If by nature one man universally through the species was as big, and as tall, and as strong as another, if every one had the same property and appurtenance as his neighbour, and if in society this design and appointment of nature was all counteracted, wisely would it be contended

that we ought to return to the appointment of nature, and enjoy that equality which nature intended for us. But here the case is so entirely the reverse, that if we return to the appointment of nature, we return to a state of absolute inequality, wherein the strongest will be without controul, and the weakest will be sunk and lost in the powerless inefficacy of his nature. Is it not then most unaccountably strange that men capable of discerning and distinguishing between truth and falsehood should act systematically upon so very false an assumption as that all men are by nature equal, when the fact is altogether the reverse, when the fact is, that by nature men are not equal, and when of the truth of this fact every hour of the day almost brings with it even ocular demonstration? Is it not equally and as ridiculously strange that men of a common understanding should consider the distinction of titles as a breach upon the equality of men's nature, and should therefore abolish them, as they have done in France? How does the taking away the title from a man of fortune make him more upon a level with you, or elevate you into an equality with him? If he hath greater possessions
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than you have, will he not be just as much your superior, as the proportion of his possessions is greater, whether you entitle him a duke, or call him only plain George or Thomas; if he hath greater possessions than you have, he will be able to do more than you can, and of course will be your superior, because you cannot do so much as he can. He can have more for his own use. He can give more to others. He can live in greater splendor than you can, and therefore, whether he has a title or not, will have greater respect shewn to him. Go into any little country place, inhabited only by villagers, and you may see it every day exemplified: the headman of the place is he that hath the greatest wealth, and though he may be the greatest boor of the little community, still he will have a deference paid to him which the others have not. The deference here is not paid to title but to the wealth and substance of the man; and so it is, and ever will be, through life in all the various combination of its circumstances. He that hath to give will be always superior to him that hath not.

But it will be said a title gives its possessor

rank and precedence, totally unconnected with his wealth and substance, wherein deference is paid merely to the title, and to nothing else. Be it so; where is the harm, where is the evil of this which calls for an abolition of titles? Where many assemble together some one must be first, some one must have the precedence; and whether this precedence is given to a person, with or without a title, does not seem to be of any particular consequence when it is morally considered; but when considered with a view to the order and regularity of our civil intercourse with each other, it hath a meaning, and a very good one in it, because it settles before-hand what otherwise might be the parent of endless altercations; no disputes being so furious and tumultuous as those which have for their object the right of precedence. Philosophers, indeed, tell us that precedence ought to be given only to the man of superior wisdom and virtue; but they forget, at the same time, that there will be some difficulty in settling to whom this character belongs. In what balance shall the wisdom and virtue of various men be weighed, in order to determine which of them has the superiority? And
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without bringing them to the balance, how will you be able to ascertain the superior wisdom and virtue of any man? Settle this matter among yourselves first, before you object to the precedence which has, from constant and uninterrupted usage, been given to the man of title. If you think any man superior to yourself, voluntarily give him place, let him precede you, but do not break in upon the institutions of society which have ordained that a duke shall precede you both. Upon the whole then, and that we may not draw this matter out into any unnecessary length, suffice it to say, that the abolition of titles proceeds from the wantonness of a childish caprice, that it never can effect that equality, which is its object, that when the title is abolished there still will remain something which will operate as effectually, and in the same manner, as the title, and cause one man without wisdom or virtue to be more taken notice of and distinguished than another who has both; and therefore, that the abolition of titles is a most foolish business, serving only to mark the idleness of that philosophy which is the parent of it.

How far the abolishing the rights of pri-

mogeniture may be considered in the same light, as the foregoing, let us now inquire. To a random, superficial, mind there appears to be something extremely unjust in the rights of primogeniture, whereby, "in a family of six children, five are exposed," that is, are not provided for in the same manner as the eldest. Thus if there is a title in the family the eldest succeeds to it, of course to the exclusion, while he lives, of the other branches. If there is an estate in the family, under certain circumstances, the first-born is heir to it. With regard to the first of these it should seem there cannot be any thing of hardship in it; the title with which the parent was distinguished cannot descend to more than one of his children, and therefore if it descends at all to either of them, it assuredly ought to descend to him who hath the priority by the order of his birth; and therefore in this there is nothing to be complained of but what would more strongly apply if the title were to descend to either of the other children. However, as the French philosophers have abolished titles, we need not dwell much upon this subject; where there are no titles to descend, it is of no consequence

sequence to whom they ought to descend, therefore let us proceed to consider the propriety of the estate descending, and being limited to the first-born. The estate consists, we will say, of a mansion-house and land. When the parent dies, the mansion becomes the sole property of the eldest; and if he left six children, the other five are most inhumanly turned out of doors to find shelter for themselves where they can. Who is there will vindicate such proceeding as this? what law is there, either in reason or justice, by which five children out of six ought to be thrown off as outcasts merely for the sake of establishing only one who, perhaps, hath not a single virtue to recommend him? Nothing but that he happened to come into the world before the others.

In answer to this, as they who thus object are persons who only skim over the surface of things, it will be necessary that we should be particularly minute. The mansion we will suppose to be, as the common run of such houses is, capable of accommodating, conveniently, the parents, children, and domestics, with a few spare rooms for the use of strangers. Here then, evidently, the mansion-

sion-house is applied to the use and accommodation of one single family, and answers its purpose well. If at the decease of the parent it descends to the eldest son, it will again answer the same purpose. But let us suppose that it doth not descend to the eldest son, but becomes the equal property of all the six children. What will be the consequence then? The eldest son marries, and, like his father, becomes the parent of six children; and as there is no reason why the other five should not marry likewise, they also become the parents of six children each. Here then the house, which was never built or intended for more than the use of a single family, becomes the property of six families, and, in process of time, becomes the property of thirty-six families. Need any thing farther be said to demonstrate the extreme absurdity of this? The house, my learned Thebans, descends to one, because it is incapable of containing all; and it descends to the eldest for the same reason that the title does. Were the six children incapable of, or interdicted from, marriage, or from becoming parents, the mansion might continue to be a residence for them all, as it was before the father's

ther's decease; and in that case the law would be both unnecessary and foolish which should determine the property of the house to be the eldest son's. But when the fact is so much otherwise, that not an instance can be produced wherein the incapability here referred to ever has happened, the law could not be otherwise than it is when it gives the property of the house to the eldest son, to the exclusion of the other five.

But with regard to the land, the case is otherwise. We will say the parent of the six children has an estate which netts him a thousand a year; at his decease we will suppose that it is equally to be divided among them, the share of each will be 166*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* With this little annual pittance, each marries and becomes the parent of six children (and he may as well become the parent of more, as of less, than six); the portion of each child will in this case be less than 30*l.* and in the next generation, will be reduced to be next to nothing; it will not be 5*l.* a year for each. So that by this philosophical distribution of a paternal estate, the world will be peopled with little else than a generation of paupers. What is here said, the reader must not consider

der as spoken at random; on a smaller scale it has been exemplified in a village, known to the writer of these pages, which forty or fifty years back was always spoken of with the word rich added to it, on account of the wealth and substance of its principal inhabitants, but now is become as inconsequential as any other poor village, and all owing to the splitting and parcelling out the paternal estate in the manner above supposed, by which means they all have something, but none have enough; they all pride themselves in having estates, but their estates are so trifling that they will not maintain them, or do more than barely pay them for their trouble in looking after them. Now then let us compare this mode of distributing a paternal estate with the mode that has been approved of, and pursued, by mankind for ages. The estate descends to the eldest, it is charged with the payments of certain sums to the younger branches, and these sums being paid, the estate remains whole and entire to the heir, who, with it, provides in like manner for his heir and family, and so on from generation to generation; so that, in this manner, as the estate is never broken up, it becomes beneficial, through a
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long succession of ages; the younger branches have each a sum according to the magnitude of the estate, which, while it does not equal them in point of property to the eldest, still places them above poverty, and enables them to pursue some line of business or profession, which may turn out both profitable and honourable to themselves. Thus we see among ourselves, the younger branches of our nobility, some pursuing the mercantile line, some the military profession, some that of the law, others doing credit to their country as sea-officers, and others as ecclesiastics. Now, had the paternal estates of these persons been split and parcelled out by the philosophical rule, they would all have thought themselves mighty men, they would have pursued no line of business or profession, and in the course of a very few years would have left their families without any other inheritance but that of poverty and beggary. Surely the wisdom of so many ages, sanctioned by the universal practice of mankind, must be superior to the contemptible and wretched twang of modern philosophers, who have not sense enough to discern that what will suffice for one will not be sufficient for six; and who,

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under a pretence of providing for the happiness of mankind by their equalizing principle, would distribute nothing but pride, sloth, and beggary, universally throughout the world.

But here the philosopher urgeth why, or for what reason, should the elder be preferred before the younger, as by the law of primogeniture, when, perhaps, in wisdom and virtue the younger is infinitely superior to the elder. The reason is in nature, the eldest is the first; immediately upon his birth he becomes the heir of his father, he becomes such when there are no others who can be competitors with him; and the younger branches, when they come into the world (if such expression is allowable), find the heirship preoccupied. The younger branches are not rejected; for not being born they were incapable of being rejected, unless, which is impossible, you can reject a thing which is not. But they came into the world under the natural disadvantage and incapacity of the inheritance, because the inheritance was engaged prior to their respective births. Now what hardship is there in this, what that is not justified by all the laws of nature,

nature, and reason that men have at any time been made acquainted with? Can it be any hardship that a man has not what, by a natural impossibility, he was debarred from having? Let us put a case. A man has issue one son, who by law is his heir; within two or three months after his birth the father dies, leaving a wife, unknown to himself, pregnant: in due course of time she is delivered of another son, but for him no provision of any kind is made; he is not only precluded from the inheritance, but from any other portion of his father's property. Now who complains of any injustice in this case? The second son was neither in being, nor in prospect, during his father's life time; and therefore no provision was made for him. But is not the case very nearly the same with regard to the inheritance? The younger children, although in possibility, yet were not in being when the elder, by his birth, became the heir of his father, and therefore were by nature incapable of the inheritance, just as the other was incapable of having a provision made for him. The question is a foolish one. Why is the elder preferred before the younger? There is no preference in the case, nor can be, except the

the elder and the younger were both to come into being at the same instant, which is impossible. The elder has the inheritance by the necessity of his birth, and not by any preference of choice; for where one only is the object there can be no choice: and in this case one only was concerned, and the inheritance became his, because there was no other; whose it could be, and if others came afterwards, they came too late; their claim would be inadmissible, as their claim would be for a property which had already found its rightful owner.

It may not, perhaps, by some be thought fair to charge men with principles which they do not openly avow; but this abolition of the law of primogeniture seems to be but too plainly an attack upon, as it most assuredly is, in defiance of, the doctrines of revelation. Mr. Burke has been exclaimed against because he has suggested that the sacrilegious conduct of the French towards their clergy and church was preparatory to their general rejection of Christianity. But if that really was the object they had in view; in the abolition of the law of primogeniture, they seem to have contemplated a general adieu to
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all revelation whatsoever. Let us hear Dr. Priestley, whose evidence cannot be partial in this instance, and he will tell us that the philosophers on the continent were all actually atheists, and of course he sufficiently justifies Mr. Burke in his suggestion. He tells us that the greater part of his philosophical acquaintance ridicule his belief of Christianity: when he was at Paris, after a serious conversation on the subject of religion, he was told by one of the company that he was the only person they had ever met with, of whose understanding they had any opinion, who pretended to believe Christianity; and as, he on all occasions, avowed his belief of Christianity, a sincere Catholic priest embraced him with tears, literally running down his cheeks, and told him "that all who were called philosophers, that he had met with before, were atheists." Now, if Dr. Priestley speaks truth here, and in a case of this nature it is not conceivable that he would speak otherwise than what is truth, we may trace the philosophical principles of the present age up to their true and genuine source, which is atheism; and then, however we may be shocked at it, we need not won-

der that persons of a philosophical complexion renounce Christianity, and scorn to pay any regard to the ordinances of a Deity.

Nothing can be more decidedly determined, by the doctrines of revelation, than the right of primogeniture; it is evident, through all the Scriptures, even from the first beginning of the issue of man; and when at any time the younger is preferred before the elder, it is always represented as a matter not of right but of punishment; and when the elder is doomed to serve the younger, it is a condemnation of him, a depriving him of that right which nature had given him, on account of his having criminally departed from, and violated, some law of the God of nature. The right of primogeniture is as old as the first-born of the first of the human race. He had, by his birth, a right to rule, a right to the pre-eminence, and to be accepted before his brother; but he did not well, therefore he forfeited his right, and God accepted his brother, when he had no respect unto, and rejected him. They, therefore, who abolish the law of primogeniture, abolish, as far as human impotence can extend, one of the first and most antient laws of the God of nature. With scorn and infamy

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to itself, philosophy has dared to make bare its arm against the God of the universe, and to annul those laws which were stamped by him in the very first nature of man. What then must we think of those clubs, what of the principles of those men who unite with, and wish success to, the promoters of such detestable impiety? If they have renounced Christianity, why are they either afraid or ashamed to publish it to the world? If with philosophy they have embraced atheism, why do they not pull off the mask, and openly avow themselves to have adopted an atheistical system? Let them come forward like men, and plainly tell us what they really are, that we may as plainly know what to think or say of them. At present, their character is so extremely unfixed and equivocal, that we know not what to call them. Christians we dare not say they are, and atheists they have not openly professed themselves. If they would, without any lurking subterfuge or evasion, point out to us the ground whereon they choose to set their foot, we would most cheerfully meet them, and, if unable to vanquish them, we would submit to be for ever the objects of their scorn and reproach.

It is remarkable, that in this philosophical attack upon religion and the Deity, the attack is not made *eo nomine*, or directly, but covertly, and from behind what we may call a political rampart. They would reform the political deviations of mankind; they would remove every thing that was unjust or unequal in the government of the world. Kings should not trample upon the natural rights of man, and the people should assert their own importance. Liberty, free and unrestrained, should be distributed throughout the world, because, doubtless, they understand how the ordinances of the world should be distributed better than its Maker; of which St. *Domingo* affords a pretty remarkable instance; and the universal exercise of the rights of conscience should take place of all religious establishments. These, with some other reforms of a similar nature, are what they affect; and as if they were matters of merely political consequence, and nothing else. But he must be blind indeed who doth not perceive how much deeper they strike. The state of nature, which they dwell so much upon, and from whence they would derive the rights of man, how possibly can we admit it, consistently with the

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the account which Moses has given us of the origin and appointment of the human race? The one or the other we must reject. The people are the source and origin of power; but this, besides its palpable absurdity and nonsense, is in direct opposition to the revelation which tells us, that God is the source of all power; and this when we put them in mind of, we have no other answer to it but that we are advocates for the right divine of kings to govern wrong. No, we are advocates for no such nonsense: we are the advocates of humility and truth; we aspire not to be like the Most High, or to assume that power to ourselves as underived, which streams down to us only from the throne of God. If they deny the derivation of power from God, why do they not prove the truth of their own derivation of it from the people? They cannot prove its truth, because it is nonsense. The people are the subjects of the power, and therefore cannot be the origin of it. This however has been sufficiently shewn in the "Free Thoughts on Liberty, &c." and therefore we will not enlarge upon it any farther here. But concerning the universal right of conscience, as they are pleased to

term it, and the abolition of all religious establishments, we must enter a little more into detail.

First, of the universal right of conscience. This, if it means any thing, we are to suppose means the right which every man has to think for himself in matters of religion.

Now this right every man, as being a free agent, most indisputably has: he may, and actually does, think for himself; and all the inquisitions in the world will not make him think otherwise than he does think. The right he has from nature; it is properly his own; and, while he is capable of thinking, it is a right which it is impossible to deprive him of. What then are these men contending for? They are contending for a right which, it is universally acknowledged, every man has, which every man is actually in possession of, and which all the powers of the earth combined cannot take away. Either therefore they do not express clearly what they really mean, or we misapprehend them, or they do not understand themselves. The latter seems to be most probable, as shall be exemplified from Sir Brooke Boothby's Letter to Mr. Burke.

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“No man (saith Sir Brooke), or body of men, under any pretence whatsoever, can assume the power of governing or forcing the belief, the thoughts, the reason of others, without the most impious and foolish arrogance of the power of God.” So say we also, and we say a great deal more; that no man now, or body of men, except they were fools or madmen, would attempt any such thing, because we all know that the attempt itself is an impossibility. By force or violence, men may be made to say and do an hundred things which are contrary to their judgment; but to make them think and judge contrary to their thoughts and judgment, is what I believe never was attempted even in Bedlam. The worthy baronet certainly must be mistaken, nor perceive how little the language he here uses tends towards the point at which he aims.

In like manner Pain, with his usual declamatory wildness, says, “The French constitution hath abolished *toleration*, and *intoleration* also, and hath established UNIVERSAL RIGHT OF CONSCIENCE.” There may be meaning in this, but not being able to fathom its depth, we must confess we do not

understand it. It has been generally understood, that conscience, and the universal right of conscience, is not subject to, or determinable by, human constitutions, either one way or the other. A human constitution can neither establish or destroy the right of conscience. It is nature's establishment as much and as truly as the sensations of pleasure or pain. How ridiculous would it have sounded had the French pretended to have established the universal right of men to feel pleasure or pain, when they were the subjects of either ! But this would not be more ridiculous than their establishment of their universal right of conscience, which every man who is not insane knows and feels himself to be in possession of by the gift of nature, and that no human power can either establish or take it away from him. So also Pain says, "The liberty of conscience which a man claims, is not for the service of himself, but of his God." But who denies him this liberty of conscience, or who can deprive him of it ? If he is an atheist, can any one hinder him from having the conscience of an atheist ? If you are a Christian, will you not have the conscience of a Christian, in spite of
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of all the efforts of all the powers in the world? Liberty of conscience is a term very much in use among men, and a great deal of evil has been effected by the use of it. But it is most foolishly misapplied; for liberty is a freedom from restraint where restraint is possible, which in the business of conscience it is not. No man, no earthly power, can restrain conscience, which will be what it is, whether this pretended liberty be given or withholden. What then is this liberty of conscience? It is a folly, it is a nothing, it is an idle unmeaning misapplication of one word to another, in order to raise a sound which shall make it seem to be that which it is not. If Mr. Pain had said, the liberty of acting according to his conscience, which a man claims, is not for the service of himself, but of his God, it would have had some meaning, and we should have understood him; but then it would not have answered his purpose; because then the question naturally would have occurred, Suppose the conscience of the claimant should be a very bad one, ought he, in such case, to have the liberty of acting according to it, and of disturbing the peace of the world? Perhaps Mr. Pain may think
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he ought; but it is believed all sober men will be of a different opinion. Think a man may as he pleases, and, if he be an atheist, he may enrol his name, if he chooses it, in any club of that denomination, but if he presumes to act, in his dealings with mankind, upon the principles of atheism, there are very few who will not say, it is quite immaterial on what tree he ends his days.

If he had said, the liberty of acting according to his conscience in the *worship of God*, which a man claims, &c. we should also have very well understood him. But then the question, here in England, would have occurred again, Is any man debarred of this liberty, and who is he? The atheist renounces the worship of a Deity, and who interrupts even him? The Jew hath his synagogue, and the Roman catholic his chapel; the sectary his tabernacle: what other liberty of acting according to his conscience in the worship of God would he have, or indeed can he have? He worships God without restraint or interruption, according to his own judgment; and he that doth this, if he hath not the liberty of acting according to his own conscience in the worship of God, he must

must tell us wherein his liberty suffereth any abridgment, for we know not where to discover it.

Most certain it is that in England no man's liberty is controuled in the worship of God: every man is free to act in this matter as seemeth good to him in his own eyes. The civil power interferes only where the civil interest is concerned: religious opinions it meddles not with, either to compel their being received or rejected. The civil power indeed presides over and governs men of all denominations, whom it restrains with the sword of justice when they are stubborn and evil doers; but it dictates to no man what shall be his religious principles: whatever they are, every man is at liberty to enjoy them unmolested; and enjoy them unmolested he certainly does, if we may give credit to public notoriety. But if we give credit to Sir Brooke Boothby, mankind has groaned for more than a thousand years under a confederation between civil and ecclesiastical power. "By this contract," saith he, "for the bodies and souls of men, the mind is first to be enslaved, and then the body delivered over to the secular arm, with its active principle, the spring of all its virtues

virtues and faculties, bound up in chains. From this complicated tyranny even death itself is no refuge. Its power extends into the kingdom of darkness: the miserable mortal who has not obeyed its ordinances here, who does not go to the grave clothed in the *san benito* of their inquisition, and carry in his hand the passport of absolution, is handed over to the agents of the hierarchy in another world, to the discipline of eternal torment." If Sir Brooke means all this of England, if he means that men's minds are enslaved in this country, and that they are handed over to the agents of the hierarchy in another world to the discipline of eternal torment, he must be a person of a most wretched information. For his own credit it is to be hoped that he has no such meaning, although by what follows we hardly know how to exculpate him from it. However, be it the one way or the other, the fact in this country is all contrary to the Baronet's representation. We have an hierarchy in England it is true, but it is bland, mild, and without tyranny; and we have a religious establishment, but it is not a burden, an evil as he is pleased to term it, but regular, decent, and unoppressive,

unoppressive. His example of the Dean of Lincoln's curate makes nothing at all against it, although he most probably meant that it should. Does the curate well supply the place of the Dean of Lincoln in his absence? Does he perform the duty of this most extensive parish as he ought? If he does (and doubtless, as he is a respectable clergyman, he does perform it as he ought), what ground is there of complaint? But take the Baronet's own words: "The miserable and inadequate provision made for the major part of the parochial clergy is also a serious grievance. In the place where I live the respectable clergyman, with a numerous family, does the duty of a most extensive parish for sixty pounds a year, while from the same parish the Dean of Lincoln receives a thousand per annum for doing nothing at all." Here then first it occurs to ask, how this matter is any concern of Sir Brooke Boothby's: may not the Dean of Lincoln and another clergyman make an agreement between themselves, without the interference of this worthy Baronet? It is not a matter of public concern, the public have nothing to do with a private agreement between two individuals: it

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is their concern, and their concern only: and Sir Brooke might with equal propriety interfere between the tradesman and the foreman in his shop, who does all the work of it, while his master receives the profit, without perhaps doing any thing at all. The Dean of Lincoln employs this clergyman because he consents to be employed: he gives him sixty pounds a year for doing the duty of the parish, because he consents to take sixty pounds a year for doing it. Hath any one a right to interfere here? or can it be the concern of any but the two contracting parties? What hath Sir Brooke Boothby to do with how much the Dean of Lincoln receives out of the parish, while he takes care to have a proper substitute to do the duty of the parish? If he could not procure a substitute, he must do the duty himself; but he hath procured a substitute, and such an one as is acknowledged to be a respectable one, and by whom the parish duties are all duly performed. What then is it to the purpose, either how much the Dean pays, or how much he receives? It is pleasant enough to hear laymen complain of the "miserable and inadequate provision made for the major part of the parochial

chial clergy," when that miserable and inadequate provision is chiefly owing to the transactions in their own favour under Henry the Eighth: then the major part of the parochial clergy were stripped of what would have been an adequate provision for them; and now they who are fattening on the spoils complain of the miserable provision which themselves are the occasion of. It is pleasant also to hear those who are advocates for the poverty of the clergy lamenting and complaining of their being so poor. Religion must not exalt her mitred front in courts and parliaments; but her ministers must be reduced to their primitive distress and poverty, wandering about in sheep skins and goat skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented, that we may be enabled to say of them, as was said of their predecessors, that the world was not worthy of them. But then again religion must not be so depressed, and her ministers so pinched in their circumstances, as the poor curate of Sir Brooke's parish, whose miserable provision of sixty pounds a year Sir Brooke thinks a serious grievance, for no other reason, as it should seem, but because a Dean of Lincoln has more. As the curate

is a respectable man, it were to be wished he had as many hundreds by the year as he has pounds; but let no one complain of his having only sixty pounds a year, if he can assign no other reason of his complaint but that a Dean of Lincoln has a thousand. This circumstance relative to the curate of Sir Brooke's parish having diverted us for a while from considering the reason and propriety of religious establishments, let us now proceed to consider that subject. However, before we quite take our leave of Sir Brooke, let a word be whispered in his ear. He says a Dean of Lincoln has an income of a thousand a year, and does nothing for it. Pray how much more does Sir Brooke for the income which he himself receives? and yet the incomes of both Sir Brooke and the Dean are held under the same tenure, and by the same security,—the laws of society. Should not the worthy Baronet take care how he sets a stone rolling, which he may not be able to stop, till it has done mischief to himself. This hint perhaps may be worth attending to. But to the subject of establishments.

A religious establishment is that religion which a state hath adopted and established to
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be its own religion, and the religion of all its members; comprehending under the term its doctrines, faith, modes of worship, and officiating ministers, with their respective appointments; and, in short, all those other circumstances, whatever they are, which are necessary toward the public profession of the religion, to be the religion of the state. A state cannot be said to have any religion at all except it be established, and have protection and preference above the other religions of the world. Suppose a state to be divided by equal portions, and to consist of Jews, Mahometans, Deists, and Christians, what would be the religion of that state if there was no establishment? You could not call it particularly either Jewish or Mahometan, or Deistical or Christian, because it would be as much the one as the other: you could not call it a compound of them all, because being so discordant, so diametrically opposite to each other, they admit not of composition; therefore it would be a state consisting of Jews, Mahometans, Deists, and Christians, undistinguished by any religion of its own; consequently a state without an establishment is a state without any religion of its own, for it is the estab-

lishment of it that determines what is its religion. Here then, if religion is of consequence to human states, we see the reason why the religion should be established, because without establishment it could not be the religion of the state. And of consequence religion most assuredly is to states, and of the most interesting consequence; for by it the exercise of every thing that is good and amiable is bound upon us, not only by human power, but by a power superior to all that is human; a power at which men tremble while they resist, and against which their resistance will ensure to them nothing but to be infinitely undone. But the necessity of religion to a state is so admirably, so unexceptionably displayed, with so much fervency of truth and energy of reasoning, in Mr. Burke's Reflections on the Revolution in France; a publication which it is almost a sin for an Englishman not to be in possession of; that it supercedes all occasion for being more particular upon the subject here. However, that we may not appear altogether to have forsaken the subject, let us consider some of the objections which are made to religious establishments.

It

It is objected to religious establishments, that they circumscribe and limit religion itself, and prohibit, as far as they extend, the worship of God, except according to one mode only; and, in the uncouth language of Mr. Pain, "under the figure of an established church, men will not suffer their Maker to receive the varied tythes of man's devotion." This objection, probably, the reader will think insufferably idle; but as it is urged by others of a less frantic turn and temper than Pain, it may be worth while to give it a distinct answer, which otherwise it would not deserve.

When a religion is established to be the religion of a particular state, it can need no proof that the laws of this establishment extend no farther than the state itself, therefore these varied tythes of devotion out of the state may be paid just in the same manner as if there was no establishment. Within the state indeed the devotion is limited to be uniform and one; but then who has any right to complain of this but the members of the state? But they do not, and, moreover, cannot complain of it, because it is their own act and deed: voluntarily they chose and

adopted the religion to be their own, and established it, with all its rites of worship and devotion. Various tythes of devotion they have none to offer up, for they are all unanimous: from a variety of hearts indeed their devotion proceeds; but they have all the same praises of God in their mouths. What ground then, what right of objection, can there be to this? May not a state have a religion of its own as well as you; and if it may, is it culpable because it protects and prefers its own choice? You prefer your religion, be it what it will, and you have a natural right to do so, if you think fit: do not then deny that right to the state which, in your own case, you yourself lay claim to and exercise.

The pretence that an establishment circumscribes and limits religion itself, is all imaginary. The agreement and union of many minds in one mode of performing their devotion to God, and the combining and forming themselves into one body for that purpose, no more operates towards the limitation of religion itself, than if the individuals of which a state consists were to continue distinct from, and unconnected with,
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each other. In their distinct and separate state their minds would be the same as to religion as in their union, and consequently they would each in their separate state be as much a check upon religion, as when they were connected together. But then this, if objected to, would bring us to that strangest of all assertions, that any particular religion, whether of an individual or of a state, is pernicious, as being a check upon religion itself. Perhaps this is what is aimed at; and the outcry against religious establishments is in order to bring us to become men of all religions; so that it may be indifferent to us whether we worship with the Siamite or the Gentoo, with the wild Arab or the African. And it is pretty remarkable that Mr. Pain, without disguise, declares himself not to be of *any sectarian religion*; by which, if he means any thing at all, he must mean, that he is of no particular religion, and of course that all religions are to him alike. Are his patrons and admirers, the Constitutional Society, of the same way of thinking? If they are, it is no matter how soon they withdraw themselves to the continent; for if they are of opinion that all religions are the same, and

that there is no way of religion which is the true and the right way, they ought to have their habitation only with those who are as mad and as frantic as themselves.

But if men of one and the same religion are formed into a society, in the establishment of their religion they exclude every one from being members of their society, or admit them into it but partially, who do not comply with and conform to the laws of that establishment. Let it be granted that they do, what then or how are the interests of religion injured by this? If you are not of the same religion as the society, why should you wish to become a member of it? If by the laws of the establishment you are excluded from being a member, doth that exclusion deprive you of your religion, or in any respect interrupt you in the practice of it? You have your liberty, and the society has a right to have its liberty. The society does nothing but what every society has a right to do. As it has voluntarily adopted a religion, and established it to be the religion of the society, it has a right to maintain it in its establishment, and to admit to the privileges of the society those only who will concur in the maintenance

nance of what it has established. But how can concurrence be expected from those who are inimical to the establishment, who have a religion of their own different from, perhaps diametrically opposite to, the religion of the society? The admission of such as these would be to act, not indirectly, but directly, against itself. It would be to proclaim its own folly in the extreme, by a voluntary contribution of its own endeavours to defeat its own purposes. If an individual has a right to make choice of any particular religion (it is his concern to take care that he makes choice of the true religion), a society consisting of a number of associated individuals hath a right to do the same; and if it hath a right to choose, it hath a right to maintain its choice. The interests of the true religion can suffer no inconvenience from hence, for that which is the true religion will still continue to be such, notwithstanding all the establishments in the world, and they who are wise and worthy will as certainly adopt it. If the society has made choice of the true religion to establish it, this most assuredly cannot be prejudicial to the interests of religion. If it has made choice of what is not

the true religion, still the interests of religion will suffer nothing from its establishment; for the establishment is only for those within its own circle, and they that are without it are not at all affected by it. That the religion of Mahomet is established in Turkey, how does that affect Christians who do not live in Turkey? or how could it affect the Christians who do live there, if they were suffered to enjoy their Christianity with the same freedom as the various denominations of Deists, Socinians, Sectaries, &c. have in England? Let it be remembered, that in England no compulsion is used; a man may or may not comply with the establishment; and after he has complied he may, if he thinks fit, withdraw himself, and refuse any farther compliance. This hath been the case with Mr. Lindsay and a few others, and what injury has been done to them on this account? None. If we think they have acted unwisely, still we think they have acted like honest men; and if we lay any blame on their judgment, we still allow greatly for them as having acted conscientiously. Why, if you have not the religious principles of a society, are you angry at its religious establishment?

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Or what harm is derived to you from it? You would not surely wish to have communion with those persons with whom, on account of your opposite principles, you can have no communion; and if you can have no communion, you cannot think yourselves injured because you are not allowed those emoluments to which communion alone would entitle you.

Upon the whole then, we may securely pronounce that religious establishments bring no prejudice to the interests of religion; for religion means either the true, or a false and corrupted religion. The latter no reasonable man will be an advocate for, as no such man can approve of falsehood and corruption; and therefore, whatever inconvenience it may suffer from establishments, there is no room for complaint. The former stands on its own basis, on the basis of eternal truth; and whether a religion opposite to it be or be not established, it makes no manner of difference to it, if it doth not operate by violence and persecution. If the establishment of a false or corrupted religion operates by oppression and persecution, the true religion will undoubtedly be subject to temporal inconveniences,
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and in such a case, and such a case only, will an establishment be prejudicial.

But if it be urged against religious establishments that the temporal emoluments which accompany them naturally have a tendency to attach the ministers of religion to the world and its corrupt and evil manners, and thereby to entail indelible disgrace even upon religion itself ; that these emoluments, instead of being the natural human means of making religion estimable, have contributed more than any thing else towards making it contemptible ; that establishments, with the riches accompanying them in foreign countries, cause many of the superior orders of the clergy to be infidels ; that there is ground for suspecting the same even in this country ; and that, in short, they cause the clergy in general to be servile and dependent, ready to concur with any measures of government, let them be what they will, in hopes of procuring favour to themselves, and of obtaining greater preferments ; and therefore “ that Christianity can never be restored to its pristine state, and recover its real dignity and efficacy, till it be disengaged from all connexion with civil power.”

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These objections of Dr. Priestley to Christian establishments appear to be extremely wild and undigested. The facts ought to have been authenticated that Christian establishments are the causes of infidelity among the superior orders of the clergy. However true it may be, that abroad the superior orders of the clergy are unbelievers, yet where is the proof of it? And if it was proved, where is the proof that they are so because they are rich; and that they would not have been so, if they had been poor? Surely there is no necessary connection between wealth and infidelity, there may be between it and immorality; but it is hardly conceivable that wealth should have such an influence over a man's mind as to cause him to disbelieve that which he would believe, if he had not wealth. If a man with ten hundred a year, from the convictions of his mind by the operations of truth upon it, is a believer, will he not be a believer if he has ten thousand a year? Why should he not? In this latter case the convictions of his mind will be just the same as in the former; and therefore there is no reason why he should not be a believer with ten thousand a year, as well as with ten hundred. Consequently

quently the infidelity among the superior orders of the clergy abroad, if any such exists, cannot be owing to the riches which accompany establishments, but must be owing to some other cause. With equal truth it is asserted, that establishments make the clergy in general servile and dependent. This is a philosophical paradox which must be left to philosophers to explain. With our plain understandings we have always conceived that an independent provision for the clergy (and such is the provision made for them by the establishment) tended to make them independent; but philosophers soar higher than we can, and with them an independent provision makes the clergy servile and dependent. But after all, what is the servility and dependence which the independence of the clergy is the cause of? It causes them, it seems, to concur with any measures of government, let them be what they will, in hopes of obtaining favour to themselves, and greater preferments. If this is true, the clergy must be a most worthless, profligate race of mortals, to concur with government in measures of oppression and ruin to their country, merely for the chance of getting a hundred or two more

more of income to themselves. That a man with an hundred a year income should be glad to have two hundred, or he that hath three to have four hundred, is not at all improbable. It is all in human nature. But that a man, for the sake of an increase of income, should concur in bringing ruin upon his country, wherein ruin to himself likewise would be inevitable, is so exceedingly opposite to the common nature of human creatures, that we must be excused in saying that it cannot be true; or if one such instance could be found, that no search would enable us to find another. When philosophers are brandishing and flourishing their weapons, they care not who is in their way, or what mischief they may do. Thus having flourished away upon the evils of establishments, and of a clergy that is supported by them, in the fire of their exertions they fall furiously upon government, which they represent as pursuing such measures as no man of honour or virtue could encourage, none except a parcel of clerical miscreants, who, for the sake of procuring favour to themselves, and of obtaining greater preferments, would concur with any measures of government,

ment, let them be what they would. But if establishments are the causes that the clergy are such miscreants, let us put a case, and suppose there were no establishments. As it is ordained that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel, the clergy must have a maintenance some how or other, and, as all will not have an equal maintenance (at least till philosophy has gained an establishment), some will be better provided for than others, and in this case consequently he that hath less will be wishing for that which is more; and if he would be a miscreant under an establishment, would be a miscreant out of one, and exert all his endeavours to accomplish his wish, and by any means to gain that which is more. Now then where is the evil to the clergy in an establishment which would not be an evil, and a means of corrupting them out of an establishment? It is foolish to say that the emoluments, where there was no establishment, would not be so great as where there was one, nor the temptation sufficient to corrupt them. The temptation does not arise from the very great magnitude of the emolument (for fifty pounds a year to a man who
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has only ten will be as great a temptation as five thousand a year will be to him that has only one thousand; and so the same in greater or lesser sums of a similar proportion); but the temptation arises from the spirit of covetousness fostered and cherished in the heart, whereby thirty pieces of silver were as effectual in making Judas betray his Master, as thirty thousand pounds would have been. Talk no longer therefore so idly, as that establishments are the causes of corruptions amongst the clergy. Corruptions, where any such are, would as certainly be prevalent where there were no establishments as where there were, and therefore most shallow and superficial must be his mode of reasoning, who urges "that Christianity can never be restored to its pristine state, and recover its real dignity and efficacy, till it be disengaged from all connection with civil power." Let us examine this saying a little.

"Christianity can never be restored to its pristine state." What is here meant by the pristine state of Christianity, if thereby is meant its first original state under the first preachers of the gospel, that state was
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a state of distress, difficulty, and persecution; the civil power was all against them, and the world was so prejudiced to their disadvantage, by the follies of philosophy, that it concurred with the civil power in endeavouring utterly to extinguish them; therefore, if by restoring Christianity to its pristine state is meant the restoring it to that state in which it was at first, when all the powers of the world were its enemies, we freely acknowledge that it cannot be restored to such a state without being disengaged from all connection with the civil power. But would this be a desirable state? is it a thing to be wished that all the world should be an enemy to the Christian name? have Christians been labouring and suffering for ages for the sole purpose of subduing the world to the faith of their revered Master? have the prophecies been multiplied and fulfilled, that kings should be the nursing fathers, and queens the nursing mothers, of the Christian church? and are we now told that we must renounce their cherishing patronage, and that Christianity cannot recover its real dignity and efficacy without it? With what shameless folly, as well as effrontery, is this urged; without
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I doubt the primitive Christians had a dignity in enduring the malice and persecutions of the world; they had an efficacy in converting the heathen world to the faith of Christ, which it is impossible we can have, because persecutions have ceased; and heathenism, unless philosophers should introduce it again, wants not to be convinced or confuted. But can any one be such a madman as to wish that the world was once more reduced to the same deplorable state? Can the ministers of Christ have no dignity except they are persecuted? nor Christianity recover its efficacy except opposed to the blasphemy of an heathen world? Christianity hath an innate dignity of its own, and its truth an efficacy independent on persecutions or heathenism; and it would be fixing a most strange character upon it if, after having converted the world to itself, it was to become good for nothing until it was again deserted and persecuted.

But it seems some good and worthy men have fallen into the mistaken notion, that the acceptance which Christianity has met with in the world, and the favours which have been bestowed upon its ministers, have

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been the causes of its corruptions; and that less dignity, and more poverty, would be a means of reforming these corruptions. But this notion is too hastily adopted. Look through the whole of the Christian ministry in this kingdom, and then say, whether you find more or greater corruptions among those who have dignity and wealth, or among those who have neither; and if you find, as the fact really is, that there are infinitely greater disorders among the lower ranks of the clergy than among those who are of the superior and distinguished orders, you will have reason sufficient to be persuaded that your notion is a mistaken one. You will not, surely, say that the irregularities among the lower clergy are owing to their poverty, and the want of a competent provision; for this will be to argue against yourself. For if their poverty is the cause of their irregular conduct, the same poverty, if introduced among the superior orders, would, in all probability, produce the same effect among them; if poverty were the necessary cause of corruptions among the clergy. But neither poverty nor wealth are the real, or any, cause at all of misconduct in a truly Christian clergyman, whose

whose character it is, that he knows both how to abound, and how to suffer want. A bad man wants not temptation to be a bad man from the emoluments of a dignified station, and a good man will not become a profligate because he is poor; we must therefore look for the causes of profligacy among ecclesiastics, where it exists elsewhere than in their poor or their exalted stations.

It hath been said, that our Master hath declared, that his kingdom is not of this world; and moreover, that when he himself was upon earth he had not where to lay his head; that, therefore, the establishment of an hierarchy, and the grandeur and worldly pomp of archbishops, bishops, and other dignified clergy, very ill suits with the character of his servants. That our Master's kingdom is not of this world is most certain; but then it is a kingdom nevertheless, and as such, it hath its various and subordinate stations and ranks: and whether wealth be annexed or not to the station, one station will be superior to, and have the pre-eminence above another; and wealth will neither add any thing to the dignity of the station, nor will poverty diminish ought from it. While,

therefore, we say the kingdom of Christ hath its various subordinate stations and ranks, as the kingdoms of the world have, we still say it derives not its dignity from what gives dignity to the kingdoms of the world, neither is its dominion obtained by worldly power and policy. The empire of Christ is over the heart and mind, subjugating, by the instrumentality of the powers of truth, and not by instruments of war, every thought to his obedience. It therefore, most certainly, is not a kingdom of this world, because its principles are so different from the principles of worldly kingdoms. But because wealth and worldly honours make no addition to the dignity of the servants of Christ, are they by that prohibited from having them? or are they inconsistent with the character they hold of being his servants? May not a world, which hath been so essentially benefited by their doctrine, and bright and shining examples, bestow upon them such temporal honours and rewards as a world hath to dispose of? and, if it finds various ranks and orders among them, may it not distribute, in gradation, those rewards and honours, so that an archbishop, or a bishop, shall have a greater proportion of
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its temporal gifts than those who are in an inferior station? If you say this is not to be allowed, because Christ's kingdom is not of this world, by the same rule neither may they eat or drink, or wear clothing, or, because he had not where to lay his head, dwell in houses. You forget that while Christ's kingdom is not of this world it is exercised in it, and that those who are set apart for his service and ministry are men as truly, and appertain to the world as certainly, as those who are not. What they are capable of as men they may have, they are permitted to have. They may use the world, but not abuse it. The outcry, therefore, against ecclesiastics on account of the temporal possessions secured to them by the establishment, is all low artifice and chicanery.

But let us say that no temporal provision whatever was made for the clergy in this or in any other country, and that they depended solely upon what their fellow Christians might choose to give them. What then would be the consequence? It deserves to be considered.

But let us premise, that as the world is now, or at least is supposed, to be Christian,

the office of a Christian minister is now very different from what it was at the first beginning of the gospel. Then it was to communicate to the world a wisdom which it knew not, to draw men off from the follies of a false philosophy by which they were bewitched, and to establish truth as its superior; to stem all the torrents of opposition by their sufferings, and to subdue the powers of the world by the cross of Christ: and, this being the commission which they had in charge to execute, temporal emoluments they paid very little attention to; and having food and raiment, that is, what was sufficient to support nature in the execution of their charge, they had leisure for nothing more; more would only have interrupted them. Houses, lands, and other possessions under their then commission, would have been of no use to them, they were incompatible with the trust committed to them. But now the wisdom which the first preachers had to communicate, hath been communicated; the world hath received it, and submitted itself, without any opposition or persecution, to the cross of Christ, and the Christian church hath been formed. The business of a Christian
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clergyman, therefore, now is to officiate with holiness in that church, to exert himself sedulously for the preservation and continuance of it in peace and unity, and to live a good Christian among Christians. Now as the business of a Christian minister is so materially different from what it was at first, the motives, the stimulus to undertake it, become less pressing and urgent. The conquest of the world, the destruction of the kingdom of the devil, the dissipation of error, and the establishment of truth, are no longer the chief objects he has in view, for these have been already effected. The objects he has in view are to be beneficial and of service by his ministry to his fellow Christians, to serve them by a labour of love. But will these objects alone, without any other aid, be a sufficient stimulus to the undertaking the ministry, especially when that ministry hath no other support but the uncertain and precarious alms and contributions of those who may give or withhold as they think proper? Allowing human nature to be what we really know and experience it to be, will men be forward to undertake the ministry, in order to be considered, in return for it, only as

almsmen, and to live as it were on the donations of insolence? Affuredly not; they will say, and it is natural for them to say, We are Christians, and may obtain the rewards of Christianity without becoming clergymen; and as the sacred office cannot be undertaken but with a certain prospect of poverty, at least without any prospect but of a very precarious subsistence, and that, moreover, subjected to the mortifying insults of the donors, we will not undertake it; we may be Christians, and good Christians, in various other professions where we may have an ample competence, an independent provision, for ourselves and families, without any of those uncomfortable mortifications necessarily attendant on the clerical profession; and therefore we shall prefer any of those other professions. Whether in thus saying men will say right or not, is not the question. But thus, undoubtedly, they will both say and act. Hence, supposing all establishments, all independent provision for the clergy, abolished, where shall we find persons bold enough to take upon themselves the sacred profession? and if the profession be once lost, how long after it will Christianity itself survive?

vive? If establishments are abolished, and the clergy made to depend merely on the alms and charitable contributions of the people, what parent will ever educate his child with a view to the ministry? In various other professions his child has a prospect of a handsome, comfortable, and independent provision for himself: but in the ministry nothing presents itself to his view but distress and insult; nothing but what a generous mind would disdain to stoop to except under the greatest of necessity. The parent, therefore, who has any regard for the temporal welfare of his child, will prefer almost any employment or profession for him before that of the ministry. Let the Christian clergyman be able to live (and why should he not?) as comfortably and as independently as other Christians live, and the objection to the ministry will be removed; while there is established for the order those various gradations of dignity and advantage, which are the greatest beauties of other states of life, it will be an encouragement to men to enter into it, and prefer it before other professions. But if the order is degraded, and presents nothing to the view but penury and distress;

or if in holding out a provision, it holds out nothing but the provision of a pauper in an alms-house, whatever encouragement it may afford to paupers to enter into it, it will afford encouragement to none others.

These things ought to be well and seriously considered, not only by those who are enemies to any stated revenues for the clergy, but by those who are projecting a new model and distribution of those revenues. Most certain it is that the molten produce of the ecclesiastical revenues, when poured out of the crucible of a philosophical fancy, may be distributed in a very different manner from the present distribution of them, whereby the superior clergy will have a great deal less, and the inferior clergy a very little more. But will any real advantage accrue to religion from hence? will the duties of Christianity be more perfectly complied with? will the morals of mankind in general be improved by it? shall we have brighter or more shining examples of goodness in the world if the revenues of Canterbury or Durham are diminished in order to increase the revenue of a Welch bishoprick! or to add five or ten pounds a year more to the income of a Welch vicar?

vicar? For what good end then should any such project as this be; I do not say put in execution, but even thought of?

The project of a more equal distribution of the ecclesiastical revenues is unjust. For the revenues of the superior clergy never appertained to, never hardly, in any instance, made a part of the revenues of the inferior clergy. The revenues of the inferior clergy were diminished and alienated from them for the support of the monastic institutions by the usurped power of the popes. The inferior clergy were never made poor in order to enrich Canterbury or Durham, but for the support of superstition and monkery. Why, therefore, should these, or any other cathedrals, be robbed for the sake of making amends to those whom they have never injured? If it would be unjust, and unjust it most assuredly would be, to make the innocent pay that which he never robbed, to make the innocent suffer for crimes of which he was never guilty; then is the project of a new distribution of the ecclesiastical revenues founded in deep injustice, as well as folly; I say folly, because it would not answer the end proposed, for numbers after the
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distribution would still be destitute of a competence for themselves and families.

A restlessness of spirit, when once it takes possession of a man, is ever pushing him on into innovations; he cannot be contented with things as they are, they pall upon the view; he calls for change and variety, as the vitiated stomach does; but change and variety can no more satisfy him than it can the vitiated stomach; therefore he roves on from change to change, till he is bewildered in the *summum bonum* of novelty, or till the final closing of his eyes bids his perturbed spirit rest. Deans and chapters, it seems, according to the project, are to be abolished, that we may see, it is to be presumed, how very different the kingdom would look when they were abolished, and how much more religious and devout we should be, when there were no morning and evening sacrifices daily offered up unto God, as now in our cathedrals. With the cathedral revenues and services are to go our Creeds likewise, that the lack of faith in the Christian may be as apparent as his lack of subsistence; and indeed, with some, the abolition of our Creeds seems to be an object upon which they are more intent than any thing

thing else. The product of a mind worked up into a foam, is the following rhapsodical apostrophe: "Rash expositors of points of doubtful disputation! intolerant fabricators of metaphysical creeds and incongruous systems of theology! do you undertake to measure the extent of any man's understanding, except your own? to estimate the strength and origin of his habits of thinking? to appreciate his merit or demerit in the use of the talent which God has given him, so as unerringly to pronounce that the belief of this or that doctrine is necessary to his salvation?" In answer to this very extraordinary rhapsody it is replied, that the fabricators of creeds do not undertake to measure the extent of any man's understanding, nor to appreciate his merit or demerit in the use of the talent which God has given him. I believe, according to the doctrines of the Apostles, the Nicene and Athanasian creeds: does my belief measure the extent of your understanding? what has it to do with the strength of your habits of thinking? Your understanding, if it is as dark as *Erebus*, will still continue to be so, let my belief be what it will. Why, moreover, are the fabricators of creeds called *intolerant*?

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It is you that are intolerant—you, who exclaim against our creeds, who are using all your endeavours that we may *not be tolerated* in the profession of them. We believe the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, to be one God, and we believe it because we were baptized into the *name* of that one God, and we think it necessary to our salvation that we should believe it; and because we think it necessary to our own salvation, therefore we think it necessary to be believed by all those who would be saved with us, and because we think that we ourselves should perish everlastingly, if we did not believe it, therefore we profess the same of all others who do not believe it. Is this intolerance? Are we to be abused and vilified for this? Then is faith intolerance, because it is not unbelief; and he that believes there is a God ought to be vilified and abused because he is not an Atheist. The Athanasian Creed, which it is become a fashion to speak against, is spoken against either through want of knowledge, or through a spirit very different from want of knowledge, and much less excusable. Whoever believes the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, to be the one and the only God, believes all that is expressed

expressed by the Athanasian Creed; and whoever does not believe this, most assuredly does not believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ; and he that does not believe that gospel, may look into it, if he thinks fit, and see what he has to trust to. But it is said, “The divine displeasure is in many places denounced against those who reject the gospel when it has been offered to them, but is not in any one place denounced against those who do not worship one *God in Trinity, and Trinity in unity, neither confounding the persons, nor dividing the substance.*” It is true these latter words are not to be found in the gospel; but the doctrine conveyed by them is to be found there; and they are used as a disavowal of those opinions of evil men, by whatever name or character distinguished, who pervert the doctrine of the gospel, either by confounding the persons of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, as if they were not distinct persons, or who, dividing the divine nature, make the Godhead to be more than one. Every man who believes that the distinct persons of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, are the one, and the only God, believes all that is expressed or intended by the
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Athanasian Creed upon the subject; whether he understands all the terms used in it or not. The terms are not the faith, but a disavowal of what is not the faith. If the terms are scholastic and unscriptural, why have evil men by their glosses and sophistry made it necessary for the church to use them? Fools and heretics were the first who introduced unscriptural terms in controverting the doctrines of scripture. The church would never have had any occasion to use unscriptural terms, if they would have been bound by the terms of scripture: but this they would not, but, wresting and perverting them from their plainness and simplicity, gave perverse meanings to them, suited to their respective follies and heresies. Against such as these, of what use would it be to urge, in the terms of scripture, so it is written, when the dispute is, and necessarily must be, about the meaning of what is so written? Therefore, unscriptural terms were by necessity resorted to, because men of perverse minds would not abide by the terms as they were written: therefore were they resorted to that the fool might receive an answer according to his folly. The doctrine of the Athanasian Creed is the genuine

quine doctrine of the gospel. If it is expressed in other terms than the plain and simple terms of the gospel, it is in order to meet the perverseness of those heretics who first departed from the simplicity of the gospel. The proposition in it that is to be believed with regard to the Divine Being, is, that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, are the one and the only true God. The terms in which this proposition is asserted are used only in opposition to heresy, and are of no consequence to the plain and humble mind which believes the proposition itself. If the plain and humble believer understands not a syllable of the terms, it is not necessary that he should understand them; they were not framed for him, but for the unbelieving heretic, and he understands them plainly enough, and therefore wants to have the Creed abolished, that it may no longer be a palladium against his subtilties and subterfuges, which he knows it is, and that it is a standing testimony against his evil doctrines. It is true, notwithstanding the Creed, some have, by craft and wiliness, crept into the church, who are enemies to that primary doctrine of the gospel which the Creed asserts,

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serts, and these of course exclaim against it, because it exposes their perfidy and prevarication to the face of day; because it oppresses them most heavily, inasmuch as it pronounces to the world that they make profession of a belief which they do not believe. But with what ease may they deliver themselves from the load of this oppression? Why do they not renounce the Creed, and relinquish the church which maintains it, as Mr. Lindsay and some other honest and conscientious men have done? Hear their answer: "Do you whose lot it may be to live in luxury, and draw thousands from the church, do you, in the violence of your moral virtue, in the intemperance of your religious zeal, in the over orthodoxy of your faith, do you call upon a poor clergyman who, in the humility of his soul, dares not say "by his authority committed to me, I absolve thee from all thy sins," or who, in the weakness of his intellect, cannot understand the meaning of the terms in which the Athanasian doctrine of the Trinity is expressed, or, in the charity of his heart, scruples denouncing damnation on his brethren, do you call on such a man to give up his preferments, to retire from the ministry,

nistry, and starve?" No, we do not call upon a *poor* clergyman to retire from the ministry and *starve*; but we do call upon every man, whether rich or poor, in an inferior or more elevated station, to act conscientiously, and no longer to traduce that church whose bread he eats. If there is a revelation from God in the holy gospels, it is a prime part of that revelation that the Son and the Holy Ghost are God in unity with the Father. Do you, therefore, or let any other adversary of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, without sophistry or tergiversation, without equivocation or superadded meanings of your own, produce, in the pure simple terms of scripture, a confutation of the doctrine, so that it shall appear as plainly that the same name is not appropriate to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as by St. Matthew's gospel it appears that it is; shew as plainly in scriptural terms only, and without glosses of your own, that the Son and the Holy Ghost *are uniformly* represented to us as not being God, that they are inferior to God, that they are mere creatures, that they are never called God, are never worshipped as God, and that they never act as God; shew this if you can, in the plain, uniform language of scripture,

without any glosses or superadded meanings of your own, and your opinions shall no longer be called heresy, nor yourselves heretics. But this you know you cannot do: the test of the pure scriptural terms you know you cannot stand. Your first predecessors in heresy were at the beginning obliged to depart from the pure terms of scripture, and so must you, if you would give any plausible colour to your heresy. The filthy Ebionites in the primitive ages, the Cerinthians, the Carpocratians, with others, the detested spawn of the bottomless pit, as the ecclesiastical writers call them, all acted in this manner, by departing from the pure, genuine terms of scripture, and by sophisticating them with perverse and superadded meanings of their own; and when the church, in opposition to their errors, appealed to the words of scripture, they in reply had recourse to perverse glosses and reasonings of their own, without foundation. In this case, therefore, what could the church do, other than it hath done? The pure words of scripture had no effect upon them, therefore it framed a Creed in terms of express opposition to their perverseness and falsehood, in terms not explanatory of the doctrine,

doctrine, but disavowing those unscriptural misrepresentations by which it had been corrupted. What therefore is there, can there be in the Athanasian Creed which a true believer of the doctrine, who holds the truth as it is in the scripture, can object to? They who do not hold the truth as it is in the scripture, may, and naturally will, object to it, because they are affected by it; but they who do, cannot without the most uncommon stupidity object to a Creed which asserts the very faith which they themselves profess, and which maintains it, in opposition to all those who would corrupt it.

But a word or two more concerning the Athanasian Creed. It is objected to it, that thereby the church imposes upon her members a profession of faith in terms scholastic and unscriptural; the meaning of which not one in a hundred understands, and yet imposes it as necessary to salvation; for it says, "He therefore that will be saved must thus think of the Trinity;" but he that doth not understand the terms, cannot *thus* think of the Trinity. In answer hereto it is to be observed,

1. That the Athanasian Creed is improperly so called. It is not a personal Creed, as the

other Creeds are, but a declaration of the whole Catholic church, and therefore is pronounced *alternis vicibus*. It is the Catholic church's assertion of the true scripture faith, in opposition to the glosses and sophistications whereby men of perverse minds have depraved it. The true scripture faith is, that the three distinct persons of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, are the one God. But heresy having thought fit to deprave this truth, by either confounding the persons, or dividing the substance, therefore the church pronounces that the true worship of God is without confounding the persons or dividing the substance. Because heresy represents the Son as inferior to the Father, therefore the church asserts that he is equal to the Father, as touching his Godhead; and because it represents the Son as being only like unto God. Therefore the church asserts that the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is all one, the glory equal, the majesty co-eternal. And, however the church, in thus asserting the faith, has recourse to scholastic and unscriptural terms, they are not terms of the church's invention, but were introduced by heresy. Thus when our

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Saviour says, I and the Father are One, the gloss of heresy is, that they are *not one by unity of substance*, but by unity of consent only. Are the terms, "without dividing the substance," the invention of the church? Most manifestly they are not: heresy first introduced them; and the church, in using them, uses them only and necessarily in opposition to heresy. By the way it may here be observed, that as unity of substance necessarily implies unity of consent, therefore unity of consent does not by any means exclude unity of substance, and therefore the evasion of heresy does no credit to the ingenuity of its original inventor, and in fact is a most wretched one. Had there been no heretical depravations of Scripture there would have been no call for, nor would there have been any creeds of human composition at all, not even the apostle's creed, but all men would have been governed, and would have abided by, the plain unsophisticated terms of Scripture. But when heresy invaded the purity and simplicity of Scripture, the church, as the guardian of the sacred deposit entrusted to her charge, was obliged to have recourse to such means as human language could af-

ford of refelling all evil suggestions, and of asserting the truth in opposition to them. Let this most certain truth be particularly attended to, that the doctrine of the divinity of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, and their unity with the Father, is no doctrine of the church's invention, is no doctrine deduced by forced inferences from passages of Scripture of uncertain interpretation, but is the plain genuine doctrine of the Scripture itself delivered in the plainest terms, and which nothing can evade but by a departure from the plainness and simplicity of those terms. He that readeth in the gospel, "I and the Father are one," what doth he read but the unity of the Son with the Father? He that readeth, "I am in the Father and the Father in me," what doth he read but this unity affirmed in the strongest terms that human language will admit? So when the Son saith, "All that the Father hath are mine," how is it possible to invent words that more strongly denote the Son's entire equality with the Father? When the apostle tells us, "that he thought it not robbery to be equal with God," can we deny his equality without departing from the genuine plainness of the apostle's

apostle's words? Let any plain man read these words in the evangelist, when Jesus had said to Thomas, "Be not faithless, but believing," "And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God," will he not think and tell you that Thomas here calleth Jesus his Lord and his God? and so in an hundred other instances. Therefore the plain terms of Scripture taken, according to their plain acceptation, evidently taught the church the doctrine of Christ's divinity and unity with the Father, and the contrary doctrine arises from giving the words a meaning which the words themselves do not present to us. This ought to be particularly attended to by young persons, who, if they have ingenuous minds, may convince themselves of the truth of it by an examination of the Scripture.

2d. As to the objection that he who doth not understand the terms of the Athanasian Creed, cannot thus think of the Trinity, as the creed requires he should in order to his salvation. In answer to this it is replied, that he who believeth the plain simple doctrine of Scripture believeth as the creed requires, because he believeth, without any of those

those depravations of the Scripture faith, and sophistry, which the creed is in opposition to, and therefore as he has the very *same faith* as he would have if he understood all the terms of the creed, and believed according to them, he doth in reality and truth, although he may not understand one single term of the creed, thus think of the Trinity as the creed directs he should. With the heretic it is otherwise, he doth not think of the doctrine in the plain and simple terms of Scripture; and therefore of him it is said, He that would be saved must *thus* think of the Trinity, that is, in the terms used by the creed, which he can be at no loss to understand, because they are terms of his own original introduction. Let this truth also be again repeated, and it is a truth which speaks for itself without being particularly enforced, that had there been no heresies, no depravations of the plainness and simplicity of the Scripture, there never would have been any creeds framed of human composition. But heresies there were almost even from the beginning, therefore was framed the creed which goes by the name of the apostles. Therefore, when Arius broached his detestable heresy, did the
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whole Christian world assemble together, and condemning, *uno ore*, his abominable doctrine, the Nicene Creed was framed; and therefore, when heresies continued to prevail, the church thought fit to declare and publish her own general faith in opposition to all the various heresies at that time known, with clauses determining it to be necessary that every man should hold the true faith whole and undefiled, and that if he did not, without doubt, he should perish everlastingly. So that the Athanasian Creed is not a piece of conjuration, *legerdemain hocus pocus*, as heretical witticism, for want of argument, delighteth to term it; neither is it calculated to perplex the minds and consciences of men, but it is the Catholic church of Christ's declaration and assertion of the true genuine faith required by the gospel, in such terms as the perverseness of heretical depravity rendered it necessary to make use of. It is framed purely against heresy, and the true believer, in the genuine doctrine of the gospel, is no more affected by it than if it never had been made, or he had never heard of it; and, therefore, that any true sincere believer of the doctrine should wish to get rid of a
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creed which so strongly asserts and maintains the faith which he believes, is what never can be sufficiently wondered at. But,

3. It is urged that the damnatory clauses are harsh and unchristian; that they condemn, indiscriminately, without making any allowances for the weakness and imperfections of different minds. This objection, as far as it goes, supposes that a matter of faith is like a mathematical proposition, whose truth will be admitted according to the strength of the mind which discusses it. But a matter of faith is not to be discussed by the mathematician's rule. In faith it is sufficient that a man understands what the fact is that is to be believed, and that he is convinced of the authority upon which it is believed. The King of Siam fully understood what the fact was for water to become a solid; and had he been satisfied of the jesuit's authority, who asserted the possibility of it, he would have believed it possible; but he was not satisfied with the jesuit's authority, and therefore he required other evidence for the truth of it, besides his word: and as it was a fact which might be submitted to the determination of his senses, therefore had he a right to insist upon

upon its being so submitted, and to withhold his assent to the truth of the fact if it was not so. In like manner, after our Saviour's resurrection with the same body which was crucified, Thomas, when he was told of the fact, would not believe it except he had other authority than that of those who told him of it. "Except (says he) I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe." Here was a fact told him of which his senses were capable of being the judges, and therefore had he a right, and insisted upon its being submitted to their judgment; he was gratified, and was convinced. But in matters of faith, relative to the being and nature of the invisible God, where are the senses to which they can be submitted, where is the mind which, by the strength of its abstraction, can determine either the truth or falsehood of the proposition submitted to it. The proposition is clear, plain, and intelligible, even by the meanest capacity; that there is one Person of the Father, another Person of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost; but that the Godhead of the Father and of the Son, and
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of the Holy Ghost, is all one. What is affirmed by this proposition any mind can perceive if it is not insane, let its weakness or imperfection be what it will; and therefore it can assent to, and believe it, if it thinks fit; but reason upon it, as to its physical possibility, it cannot. Reasoning upon such a subject as this is all idle, because it is reasoning without a medium. The divine nature of God ought to be fully and comprehensively understood (which, while we are in the flesh, is impossible) before we can say whether it will or will not admit three distinct Persons to be in it, without any breach of its Unity; therefore the proposition, as to its truth or falsehood, cannot be judged of by reasoning, but must depend entirely upon the authority of the revelation by which it is communicated to us; and he that believes it, must believe it upon the alone authority of that revelation, and nothing else. Could the Being of God be subjected to our scrutiny and examination, as the body of our Saviour after his crucifixion, we might withhold our assent to any proposition concerning it until it had undergone that scrutiny and examination; but as any such scrutiny and examination is impossible,

impossible, whatever we believe or know concerning the being and nature of the Godhead, must be by some authorised revelation which we cannot reject by reason of the authority on which it stands. Such authorised revelation Christians acknowledge to be the gospel, and according to that revelation it is impossible for any reasonable man, if he takes what is said in it in its genuine plainness and simplicity, without any glosses or superadded meanings of his own, not to come to this conclusion, that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, are one God.

In the days of old, prior to the days of Moses, God was known to the antient fathers only by his name El Elohim, &c.; but by his name Jehovah was he not known to them. To Moses, when a new dispensation was to take place, he revealed himself by his name Jehovah, that unutterable name, as the Jews call it, expressive of his self-existent being, of his being the Author of being to all others, and of his rigid and impartial justice; and thus he continued known to men till the fulness of time came, when the dispensation of mercy was to beam forth upon us by the manifestation of the Messiah.

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Then God was pleased to reveal himself by his evangelical name of mercy and love; a name as unknown to the fathers of the preceding ages as the name Jehovah was unknown to the Fathers preceding the days of Moses, and that all men, from the highest to the lowest, might know and reverence this name of the Lord their God: it was ordained that every one, who was to become a partaker in the benefits of the Christian dispensation, should be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, with this sanction added to it, "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned." Surely this sanction, this necessity of faith, whatever else it may comprehend within it, must extend to the necessity of faith in the revealed evangelical name of God: nay, from the manner in which this necessity is expressed, I think there cannot be any doubt of it. He that is baptized is baptized in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. But what faith the Scripture? He that believeth and is baptized (that is, in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost), shall be saved, therefore the word *believeth* referreth
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to the name of the Father, &c. as well as the word baptized; and the gospel requires us to believe in, as well as to be baptized in, the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and of course, when it is added, he that believeth not shall be damned, it means, he that believeth not in that name in which he was baptized shall be damned. This appears to be, without any subtilty or artifice, strictly and literally the truth; and if it is, what doth the Athanasian Creed, in its damnatory clause, say more than the gospel itself doth? I am aware of the objection which will be urged by the philosopher that the words, as they stand in St. Mark, relate to faith in the gospel, and not to any particular doctrine. But what kind of faith that can be which believes in the gospel, without believing in the doctrine of the gospel, is what I own I as little understand as I do what is the gospel of a philosopher. The very first principle of the gospel, and that with which its other principles are essentially connected, is that God is our Father, our Redeemer, and our Sanctifier. Faith, therefore, in this God surely must be as necessary as baptism in his name, for without it baptism

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seems to be nothing but a mere unoperative form, inasmuch as when it is said, He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved, it is added, He that believeth not (however he may have been baptized) shall be damned; so that baptism alone, without faith, will avail nothing as to our salvation. But if faith and baptism, combined, operate together to our salvation, and so the Scripture expressly saith it does, then is the faith required to be as the baptism is, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Consequently, when the Athanasian Creed requires us to believe in this evangelical name of God, what doth it require more of us than the Scripture itself requires? Why therefore do you object to it? You believe, you say, in the true Scripture doctrine concerning the Trinity, but still you wish, with Archbishop Tillotson, that we were well rid of the Athanasian Creed. The archbishop, doubtless, had his reasons for wishing to be well rid of it. But surely you do not wish to be well rid of it merely because he did. What are your reasons for wishing to be well rid of it? You say you do not object to it upon your own particular account, but because it gives
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so much offence to many of your brethren who do not believe as you do: and so because many of your brethren, who deny the faith which you yourself believe, and against whose evil opinions the creed is particularly framed, are offended, therefore you wish the creed was abolished? Thieves and house-breakers are offended at the laws against dishonesty. Do you wish these laws were abrogated because they give offence to them? you may as well wish the one as the other. Do you not see how you make a tool of yourself in order to forward the purposes of others? But, after all, what harm does the creed do to these your offended brethren? does it compel them to disown their opinions? No. Does it inflict any punishment upon them? No. And when it threatens them with everlasting perdition on account of their unbelief, if the threat is ill founded it never will be fulfilled upon them, and therefore is merely a *brutum fulmen*. But you urge it causes numbers to persevere in their dissension from the church, who, if the creed was abolished, would unite themselves to it. True, I believe, many would then profess themselves members of the church, when they could do it, without

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being obliged to pronounce sentence upon themselves : but would they at the same time lay aside their evil opinions? Most assuredly they would not; and then what benefit would the church receive from their professing themselves to be members of it? Better, far better is it that they should continue as they are in their dissension, than that they should affect to incorporate themselves where it is not possible that there can be any union : for if such as these should once get free and unrestrained admission into the church, the Christian faith would soon, very soon, depart out of it. He well knew what he said, when he admonished the Corinthians not to be unequally yoked together with unbelievers ; for what communion, saith he, hath light with darkness? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

But lastly, it is urged, that the Athanasian Creed is a violent imposition upon the whole Christian world, because it requires faith in a particular doctrine as necessary to salvation ; for that, without the very height of presumption, no man “ can unerringly pronounce that the belief of *this* or *that* doctrine is necessary to salvation.” What then

is the gospel, what the religion of Jesus Christ? which most assuredly is the religion of faith, or it is nothing at all. And what and how melancholy is the condition of Christians who are required to believe, under the penalty of damnation, and yet are left under such a cloud of impenetrable darkness, that they are unable to pronounce unerringly what it is they are to believe in order to their salvation. They dare not, it seems, without the greatest presumption, pronounce that they are to believe either in *this* or *that* doctrine. Is it possible that such a suggestion should have fallen from the pen of a Christian? It is more than possible, and who will not say, *Pudet pigetque*. But I forbear*.—Let us return to the subject of establishments, from whence I have so long digressed.

There is an objection to establishments, derived from the mode in which the clergy are

* If in what I have said upon this subject, I have been free in the use of the terms *heresy* and *heretic*, let me request the reader to be persuaded that thereby I have not intended to give offence to any man. They are scripture terms, and I know of none other that so pertinently distinguish between those who receive and believe the plain scripture doctrine as it is, and those who do not.

provided for by tithes. These, it is represented, are extremely oppressive, injurious to the public, and the greatest checks that can be to agricultural improvements. Mr. Fox is pleased to style them barbarous, but why, is not quite so easy to say; for there seems to be very little connection indeed between tithes and barbarism, unless the Right Honourable Gentleman shall think fit to tell us they are barbarous because they had their origin in the feudal times. But if he does, an unlucky question or two will require an answer. Were tithes the invention of the feudal times? Were they never heard of in the world before the feudal times? A plain and direct answer to these questions, which every man of common knowledge and reading is able to give, will determine at once how far tithes may with propriety be called barbarous. However, our business at present is not with a word, but with facts. Are tithes checks to agricultural improvements, and of course injurious to the public, or are they not?

By tithes we understand the tenth part of the produce of the land. Thus the tithes of an acre of land producing twenty bushels of wheat are two bushels.

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He that is in possession of an acre of titheable land, either by inheritance or by purchase, possesses it knowing that he is entitled only to nine tenths of its produce, be the produce more or less.

He that occupies it as tenant pays rent for it only in proportion to that part of its produce to which he is entitled.

Now then we will suppose the occupier of this acre, by manure and proper management, to be able to increase its produce from 20 to 30 bushels; in that case the tithe will be three bushels; he, instead of 18, will have 27 bushels, but his rent will continue to be the same. Here then, by this improvement of his land, he is benefited a full third in its produce beyond what he pays rent for. Now how is it possible that in this instance tithes can be any check to agricultural improvement? Tithes in this instance, to be a check to improvement, ought to operate so as to leave the farmer little or no advantage at all; whereas here we see it leaves him benefited by a full third.

Should it be said (for in these philosophical days there is hardly any thing that men will

not say) that a third increase in the produce will not indemnify the farmer for his expence, except he has the tithe bushel as well as the other nine : let it be observed that, except in some very extraordinary cases, his expence in improving the produce of his acre from 20 to 30 bushels cannot be any thing near the value of his increased profit. Let us estimate the wheat at 6s. a bushel, the value of the increased produce to the farmer, after the tithe is deducted, will be 54s. a sum more than double the expence of obtaining the improved produce. This every farmer knows to be true, and therefore it needs not be proved. But perhaps this kind of improvement is not what is meant when it is said that tithes are a check to agricultural improvement. Let us then state the case of barren and unproductive land: the proprietor of this land wishes it to be brought into a state of cultivation; he determines upon accomplishing it, he expends an hundred pounds upon it, and in the course of three years effects his purpose. But no sooner does it become productive, than the rapacious tithingman, who had not laid out a sixpence in the improvement,

ment, runs away with the tenth of the produce, to the very great prejudice of the proprietor.

Here, in the first place, let it be observed, that whatever injury may arise to the proprietor from the tithing-man, it is an injury which he knew before hand he must subject himself to if he improved his land, and therefore, whatever of injury there is in it, he brings it entirely upon himself. But this you will say is the very hinge on which the question turns; for proprietors, who know they shall be injured by the tithing-man, will not, for that very reason, improve their lands, and therefore tithes are a check to agricultural improvements.

Let us allow that there is in this instance some small degree of truth; yet how easily may it be obviated: the injury to the proprietor is, that he is to be at the whole expence of the improvement, and then is to be deprived of a part of its produce by the tithingman; and that part which he is deprived of may be the whole that would be gained by the improvement. Let us suppose the proprietor, in principal and interest, for three years lays out an hundred pounds, the improved

proved land ought to pay him annually his interest for that sum, which we will rate at four and a half, with a considerable surplus, in recompence for his trouble and hazard; but the whole that it yields him perhaps is five pounds, and no more; of course the whole profit on the improvement is ten shillings only, and this the tithing-man runs away with; so that the proprietor lays out an hundred pounds upon his land and gains nothing in return, but his trouble and hazard for his pains. A case so disadvantageous as this to the proprietor is not very probable indeed; but as it is possible, therefore it is put. Now then, in answer to this, let it be remembered, that tithes are established by the law of the land, by the same law which secures his property to the proprietor; and that the hardship in the case is, that the tithing-man participates in no share of the expence or hazard attending the improvement. The hardship is not that the tithing-man takes a tenth of the produce of the improved land, but that he contributes nothing towards making it productive. For this, however, so easy a remedy might be provided, that it is rather extraordinary that it
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never has been thought of: for instance, when a proprietor chooses to hazard the improvement of his land, by bringing it from a barren to a state of cultivation, let him be either indemnified in one tenth of the expence (the expence being first clearly and indisputably ascertained) out of the tithes as they arise, or (in order to guard against juggles or collusion) let it be at the option of the tithing-man to pay him that tenth of the expence at once, and thenceforward be entitled to the tithes as in other cases. Here then the hardship arising from the proprietor's being deprived of the tithe of that land which he alone, at his own expence, had made titheable, is removed. There is a statute, indeed, which provides, that the proprietor shall have his land tithe free for seven years after the improvement made: but the tithe of seven years, in the case already stated, would not amount to one tenth of the expence, would hardly amount to it in twenty years; therefore, notwithstanding the statute, it might be urged, that tithes are an obstruction to agricultural improvements: whereas, by the mode here recommended, the objection would be entirely done away; for if the

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tithing-man pays his quota of the expence; he has as just a right in equity as well as law to the tithe of the produce, as the proprietor hath to the other nine parts of it.

But it will be said, whether the objection be thus removed or not is quite immaterial, tithes in any manner paid or demanded are obstructions to agricultural improvement. I am in possession of the land, my labour and expence are employed in causing it to be productive; the tithing-man in general has no share in either, and yet he takes from me a tenth part of what my industry, and not his, has caused the land to produce. This is a hardship of very great magnitude, and cannot but operate extremely to the disadvantage of all improvements in agriculture: for who will bestow his labour where he has a certainty that he shall not enjoy the fruits of it, where he is certain that another will come and plunder him of a tenth part?

This objection, it must be owned, is popular and plausible, and well calculated to make an impression upon weak minds; but let us ask a question or two upon the subject. You say you are in possession of the land, by what right are you in possession of it? Is it
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by a natural right, or by the laws of society? By the former, except you are deranged in your intellects, you will hardly say it is; therefore your right of possession is derived to you from the laws of your country, which secure to you the possession, and protect you in it; for if your right were not derived from the laws, your possession would be altogether precarious; it would be only till some one of greater strength and might than yourself should think fit to dispossess you. If then your right is derived to you from the laws, that right will also be determinable by the laws, and can be no more than the laws have given you: what then is the right which the laws have given you? They have given you a right to hold your land as a possession to yourself, and to cultivate and dispose of it as you shall think proper. But then they have subjected this land, in the possession of which you are protected, to a deduction of one tenth of its produce; therefore, the deduction of one tenth of the produce of your land is the condition annexed to your being secured in the possession of it. What then have you to complain of? You labour for others, you say. It is true in some measure you do; but
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you labour in a much greater degree for yourself; and if one tenth goes from you, the other nine parts are your own. Which are most assuredly a very ample recompence for your expence and labour. But still a man will say, why should any be taken from him? why should he not enjoy the whole produce of his labour? The answer is, because the laws have ordained that he should not: those very laws which secure to him his property, and which will not suffer him to be deprived of it injuriously and without his own consent.

Philosophers, it is presumed, will not refuse to acknowledge that property arises either from possession simply, without any other security or protection in it than what a man can supply from his own individual strength, or it arises to him from possession, secured and strengthened by the arm of society, which, acknowledging the right of possession to be in him and in no other person, will not suffer him to be molested in the peaceable enjoyment of what he possesses. In the former case the whole produce of his labour may indeed be his own without any deduction from it; but then, without any
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certainty or assurance that it shall, for when a stronger than himself comes upon him, he will not only take from him the produce of his labour, but dispossess him likewise of the land from whence that produce was obtained, therefore in this case all is casual and uncertain. In the other there is nothing hazardous or doubtful: the laws of society secure to him the possession of his land against all intruders, and the produce of it against all, except those to whom they have allotted a tenth part of it. If you complain of this allotment, assuredly you complain most unjustly. The partiality of the laws is undeniably very great in your favour, when it secures to you the portion of land which you happen to be in possession of against all who might have strength and ability to dispossess you of it; and the allotment of a tenth part of its produce is but a very moderate compensation of the law's justice towards those who have no land. Compare these two cases together, and say, whether is preferable a precarious, unprotected, right of possession of the land with all its produce which you can enjoy, only so long as no one chooses to deprive you of it, or a protected right of possession wherein

wherein no one either by fraud or violence is suffered to molest you; subject only to a deduction of one tenth of the produce for the use of those whom society sets as great a value upon as it does upon yourself. What is your right of possession? You are entirely indebted to society for it, and you have that right purely because society chooses to acknowledge it. If you have any other right, shew us what it is. Possession is not right: God and nature have not given you any right; for you came into the world as naked and destitute of possession as you will go out of it. The right, therefore, which you have to the possession of your land accrues to you entirely from the laws of society; and in fact your possession is a donation to you from it. If then the land is a donation to you, and such it most certainly is, with what justice can you complain of tithes as injurious to you? Have you any right to the possession of your land without paying tithes? Society hath not given it to you? On the contrary, society hath given you your land's possession, subject to the payment of tithes. Groundless therefore, as it is unjust, is your complaint concerning tithes. A very ingenious

nious writer, the author of the "Wealth of Nations," in order to throw as much odium as he can upon tithes, calls them a tax, a destructive tax, upon the land. He urges that the culture of madder, on account of tithes, was confined to the United Provinces, and would never have been introduced into this country had not a statute, "Enacted that five shillings an acre should be received in lieu of all manner of tithe upon madder." Here then, in the first place, it may be observed, that the culture of madder does not seem to be in any respect necessary to the existence or welfare of this country. So that whether it was or was not cultivated in England could not be very material, and consequently, if the law of tithes confined its cultivation to the United Provinces, no general detriment arose to the inhabitants of this country from it. It is true some advantage would be derived from its cultivation to a few dyers. But what are these when compared to the community in general, who must be supported by the cultivation of the corn and wood, and pasture-land, of the kingdom? However let us examine the fact alleged by Dr. Smith, that the law of tithes operated

to the disadvantage of the culture of madder. To this end let us consider the expence and profit attending the cultivation of an acre of madder, when no tithes are paid, and the land is rented at 40s. an acre. The whole expence, it seems, for three years, is 15l. 5s. (the particulars may be seen in the fourth volume, page 175, of the *Museum Rusticum*) for which term no profit arises to the cultivator. In the autumn of the third year the roots are taken up, when the produce amounts in value to 52l. 12s. 6d. from which the expence being deducted, the clear profit will be 37l. 7s. 6d. Now then, subtracting a tenth from this sum, the cultivator will nett 33l. 12s. 9d.; so that the annual profit to the planter upon a single acre will be, notwithstanding Dr. Smith's destructive tax, no less a sum than 11l. 4s. 3d. that is almost six rents of the land! Would not one have imagined from this writer's representation, that if the full tithes were taken, the remaining profit upon an acre would not be worth the planter's attention? and yet here we see the remaining profit vastly exceeds the profit upon any other cultivation: so that the complaint against tithes, as prejudicial to the cultivation

tion of madder, is not founded on the planter's having too little, but on the tithing-man's having so much more than he would have if the land was planted with any other crop. In the valuation here stated of the crop of one acre, the tithe amounts to 3*l.* 14*s.* 9*d.* in three years ; but if planted with any other crop, it would not yield to the tithing-man more than 15*s.* or 18*s.* and therefore, except the tithe from madder be fixed at the average value of the tithe of any other crop, I will not raise madder, saith the planter ; and because he will not, Dr. Smith teaches us that the law of tithes operates to the disadvantage of the culture of madder. This, it must be confessed, is most curious reasoning : it is neither more nor less than saying, because a plantation of madder will be so much more beneficial to the tithing-man than a plantation of any other crop, therefore I will not plant it, although it will be so beneficial to myself. But how can this objection be said to arise from tithes ? It arises from the despicable temper of the objector, who, overcome by the unmanly spirit of envy, declines the cultivation purely from that malignant principle alone ; for now that the tithes are fixed at

the low rate of five shillings an acre, the objection is at an end.

The reasoning of Dr. Smith on the subject of tithes is extremely fallacious ; and in justice to his character we will suppose that he was not aware of the fallacy of it himself. “ In some rich lands (he says) the produce is so great, that one half of it is fully sufficient to replace to the farmer the capital employed in cultivation, together with the ordinary profits of farming stock in the neighbourhood. The other half, or, what comes to the same thing, the value of the other half, he could afford to pay as rent to the landlord, if there was no tithe. But if the tenth of the profit is taken from him by way of tithe, he must require an abatement of the fifth part of his rent, otherwise he cannot get back his capital with the ordinary profit.” But what does all this amount to ? Only that the tenant, if he did not pay to the tithing-man, could afford to pay so much more to the landlord, which I suppose no man in his senses will deny ; but it is nothing at all to the purpose, except it had been previously proved that all the profits beyond the ordinary and allowed profits of the tenant ought to go

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to the landlord, which cannot be proved, because the law, the law by which the proprietor holds his land, directs that one tenth shall go to the tithing-man, and not to the landlord; and the landlord holds his land knowing it to be so, and the tenant rents the land knowing that the tenth part of its produce goes to the tithing-man, and not to the landlord. But again Dr. Smith says,

“ Upon the rent of rich lands the tithe may sometimes be a tax of no more than one fifth part, or 4s. in the pound; whereas upon that of poorer lands it may sometimes be a tax of one half, or 10s. in the pound.” But what has ~~tithe~~ to do with the rent of the land? The tithe, let the rent of the land be what it will, is the tenth part of its produce; and whether the rent be half a crown or fifty shillings an acre, is of no manner of consequence. If the tithe were taken out of the rent of the land, the tithe might in some measure be called a *tax* upon the rent; but this in the knowledge of every one it is not; and therefore Dr. Smith greatly deceived himself when he called it a tax upon the rent. Can a landlord with any degree of propriety call that which he has not, and which he is

not entitled to, a tax upon his rent? But the tithes are not his; by the laws of the land they are the property of another, and he never receives them either with or as part of his rent; consequently they are not deducted from it, and therefore are no tax upon it. A tax is a deduction from something which a man has; but if what he has not may be called a tax upon him, then is it a tax upon every man that he has not his neighbour's property. The tithes are the property of another, and therefore are no tax upon the landlord; and consequently when Dr. Smith says the tithes are a tax of one fifth or one half part of the rent of the land, he miserably deceives himself; and in general all the writers against tithes proceed upon mistaken or fallacious grounds. They assume that tithes are not property till after they are separated and taken from the other nine parts, which is not true: they are the property of the tithing-man as certainly as the land is the property of the land owner; and they are such, wherever there is a crop, whether separated or not; and they at no time make any part of the property of the owner of the land; for if they did, he might have his ac-
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tion for the recovery of them when taken away, which he hath not; and if they were not property till after they were separated from the other nine parts, the owner or occupier of the land would have nothing to do but to carry off the whole of the crop before any separation was made, and he would be justified in it. But this we all know he may not do; therefore tithes are true and real property. But if they are, what are they doing who object to tithes? May not the tithing man have his property as well as you have yours? Objections to property in society, when that property is founded in the laws of the society (and in the laws alone is property of any kind founded), are indefensible, and their tendency is to throw every thing into confusion. For when once property is attacked in one instance it may be attacked in another; and if the proprietor of the tithes may be deprived of his property, by the same rule the proprietor of the land may be deprived of his; and then where shall we stop? and what will it all end in? It will end only in the annihilation of all property; for as tithes are considered as a tax upon the rent of the land, so will the possession of the land be considered.

as a tax upon the community; and hence no man will have any thing, which he may call his own, any longer than while he can by his own individual strength maintain the possession of it.

But before we quit this subject it will be proper to obviate an objection which has been made to tithes, when it has been suggested that if they are property, they became so only from a very modern date: Dr. Priestley dates their origin from the times of King John. But in this, as in his assertions in general, Dr. Priestley is wonderfully superficial.

In the reign of King John the rights and privileges, and property, of English subjects were more perfectly secured to them than they had been in former reigns, and among them the property of tithes. But tithes, or property of any other kind, did not first begin to be known in England in his reign. Property was known in England for ages before the time of King John, and secured to its owners by all the authority which the constitution of those days was acquainted with. And *Magna Charta* is not the first institution of the property of tithes, but a confirmation of all the several grants of them which had been made

made in former reigns. It is a mistaken notion that tithes were first made *general* in the reign of King John, for the grant of tithes in general, throughout the whole kingdom, had been made long before. Of this there is the plainest proof from the charter of King Ethelwolf (to go no farther back), who, with the consent of all the great men, ecclesiastical as well as temporal, *with the entire approbation of the Commons*, did grant to the church *decimam partem terrarum* throughout the whole kingdom. The grant was first made by him in 854, and again renewed the following year, when it was presented by him in a most solemn manner upon the altar of St. Peter's Church in Winchester; and to make the grant as certain and notorious as possible, it was sent abroad and published in every parish church in the kingdom. When Dr. Priestley, or any of his fautors, choose to object to tithes again, it is recommended to them to attend a little more to matters of fact. Let us dismiss Dr. Priestley then, and his objections, as too idle to merit any farther notice, and observe, that whoever is persuaded of the truth of revealed religion, and is uncontaminated with the delusions of modern philosophy,

philosophy, will readily accede to this proposition—That the mode of provision, which Almighty God himself appointed for those who were to minister at his altar, is the best and the most unexceptionable; and therefore, when such persons see that under the Jewish dispensation his ministers had a grant made to them of the tithe of the land for their maintenance and support, it is impossible for them not to be persuaded that such provision is founded on the depths of the truest wisdom, and that it may be justified against all the exceptions which the perverted reason of man can at any time suggest.

It is true, that under the Christian dispensation, the ministers of Christ cannot lay claim to tithes under the same sanction of divine authority as the Jews did, as they seem no where to be particularly enjoined by the gospel. It is only ordained, that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel. But then, as they are to live of the gospel, it must be by some certain mode of maintenance; and what other mode of maintenance can the wit of man devise preferably to that by which the Jewish ministry was maintained? Alms, and the charitable contributions

tributions of the benevolent, are all precarious; they may at one time be exceedingly abundant, as they were when Christians were combating with the powers of the heathen world, when they not only gave the tenth, but sold the whole of their possessions, that they might be distributed for the benefit of the Christian church. And they may be sparing and penurious, altogether insufficient, for supplying the necessities of those who stand in need of them, and sufficient only to show how impossible it is that a Christian ministry should be supported by them. This our forefathers well considered when the world became Christian, and therefore, conforming themselves to the example which was given them under the Jewish dispensation, they ordained, that tithes should be a provision for the Christian clergy, and that they should be secured to them by the same laws as secure the property of any other individuals. And this they did, that the Christian clergy might neither consider themselves, nor be considered by others, as a burthen upon community, but as a part of it, and as having the same call and right to an independent and certain provision as any others.

others of the community had. Say philosophers, why the laws should give and secure to you, who have no religion, a certain and independent provision, and withhold it from those who are the ministers of religion. Are not the ministers of religion men as well as yourselves? Have they not the same natural rights as you have? Have they not the same natural wants and necessities? Why then are they to be pinched with hunger and poverty, while you feed and have abundance? Or why are they to be made dependent for a precarious subsistence upon the good will of those who, perhaps, like yourselves, may have nothing but evil will towards them? Is there any thing in nature or reason, or in equity, that will justify this? Most assuredly there is not, and therefore the outcry of those who exclaim against establishments, and against any permanent provision for the Christian ministry, is altogether unnatural, unreasonable, and most unjust. But you say you do not exclaim against a permanent provision being made for the clergy, but against the mode by which it is made by tithes; these you say are offensive and odious. But why are they so? because you are greedy and covetous;

vetous; because you are not contented with the nine parts which are your own, or for which you pay rent, except you can have the other tenth part which is not your own, and for which you pay no rent. However, not to enter into any farther argument upon the subject of tithes, if you dislike them, devise, if you can, some other mode of provision for the clergy without them, which shall be equally certain and permanent, equally valuable and advantageous, and which shall no more entangle them with secular affairs than tithes do; and when you have or can do any thing of this kind, the clergy, doubtless, will have no objection to it. But, until you have or can do it, the less you say in objection to tithes the better, for your objections will prove to be as idle and unfounded as is your philosophy which is the parent of them.

And, indeed, the philosophy of the present age is the idlest and most ridiculous introduction of folly into the world that is conceivable. Various instances might be given in addition to those which have been already mentioned of the truth of this; but we will content ourselves with the mention of one
more

more only, and that shall be Pain's and his philosophical brethren's notion of a constitution, and of the origin of the English Parliament.

A constitution, it is imagined, may be truly described to be that particular combination of the legislative and executive powers in a country from whence are derived the form and operations of its government; and in proportion as the combination of these powers is either well or ill adjusted, so likewise will the government of that country be either good or bad: therefore, wherever there is an existing government, there by necessity must be a constitution of which it is the offspring.

But now let us hear our philosophers, who, with a wisdom peculiar to themselves, have discovered that there may be an existing government in a country without any constitution at all. Pain repeatedly tells his reader that in England there is none; that the badness, the corruptness of its government is a proof that there is none. He calls upon Mr. Burke to produce the English constitution; and, taking it for granted that he cannot, says, "We may fairly conclude, that though it has been so much talked of,

no

no such thing as a constitution exists, or ever did exist." What shall we say to such a reasoner as this? If there is a government in England, it must be derived from the legislative and executive powers, for without them no government could exist any where; and from whatever the government is derived, that is the constitution. But surely it is unnecessary to prove that the legislative and executive are the powers by which a government is constituted, since it is impossible that government can be exercised without them: if it can, shew us how; shew how government can be exercised, detached from and unconnected with the legislative and executive powers. But if government is constituted by these powers, then these powers, let them reside where they will, are the constitution. It is most wretched trifling and folly to argue as these people do, that because a government is corrupt, therefore there is no constitution. They might as well argue that, because a man is a valetudinarian, and unhealthy, therefore he has no constitution. Is there not a variety of constitutions of the natural body, by which its life and well or ill being is regulated, and from whence it

it proceeds? Are not some constitutionally strong and athletic, and others tender, delicate, and infirm? And will you say, because they are infirm, they have no constitution? You may as well say this as argue that the corruptness of the government in a country is the certain sign that it hath no constitution. The political life of a country, which is its government, in its well or ill being depends entirely on its constitution, upon the peculiar temperament, idiosyncrasy, of it; and whatever that peculiar temperament may be, by that will the government necessarily be affected. If that is firm and strong, so will the government be; if it is otherwise and defective, the government which flows from it will be defective likewise.

But Pain says, "The continual use of the word constitution in the English parliament shews there is none; and that the whole is merely a form of government without a constitution, and constituting itself with what powers it pleases." Here again we have an instance of the strange paradoxical operations of modern philosophy upon the minds of its votaries. How can a form of government exist without being formed and constituted?

Here

Here also we see how possible it is for a man to write as if he had ideas, and yet in reality to have none at all. "The continual use," he says, "of the word constitution in the English parliament, shews that there is none; and that the whole is merely a form of government," &c. The whole what? Is it the whole form of government? The whole constitution? or the whole parliament? Or does he mean the whole use of the word constitution is merely a form of government? Is it possible for a man to frame to himself any consistent idea from these words of Pain? Doubtless he must think he has some himself; but as he has not thought fit to communicate them to his reader, we must leave him to the solaces of his own imagination. In the mean time, let us attend to something which perhaps may be thought more substantial than the whole of Pain's publication.

Wherever there is a form of government, there of necessity must be legislative and executive powers, from whence that form proceeds, and by which it is maintained, and this we say is the constitution; and this constitution (merely in compliance with popular opinion, for it is destitute of proof) we will

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farther say, had its origin in the first combination of a people into society, when by a social compact legislative and executive powers were agreed upon, and a form of government in all its various departments was founded and established upon these powers. These societies upon earth being various, various also would be their social compacts, and various the constitutions and forms of government. What one society would approve and adopt, another would reject as totally inconsistent with its well being or continuance. Hence some forms of government would naturally be better and more perfect than others; for in a variety of different forms it is not to be supposed that all would be equally perfect: but then, notwithstanding this comparative imperfection in some of them, there would nevertheless be a constitution, the parent of each of them, even of the most imperfect; for wherever there is an existing government there must be a constitution, which cannot cease till all is anarchy and confusion; where there are governors and governed, there must be legislative and executive powers, and where they are there is a constitution.

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It makes nothing against what is here said to urge that the legislative and executive powers were the consequence of an original social compact, when men first formed themselves into society; for although according to the hypothesis it is true, it by no means follows that the consequence of the social compact is not the constitution, but just the contrary, that it is, and thus much Pain acknowledges, if he means by his own words what they appear to signify; for, p. 56, where he undertakes to define what a constitution is, he says, "The constitution of a country is not the act of its government, but of the people constituting a government." Now the word *act* signifies something that is done; and the act of a people constituting a government is that which is done by the people upon such occasion; and that which is done by them is the result, the consequence of their social agreement or compact, and the result of their social agreement being the establishment of legislative and executive powers; therefore, the result of the social compact in the establishment of legislative and executive powers is the constitution, and from these powers is derived government in all its various departments. But it is to be

feared Pain does not mean any thing of this kind by what he says; and perhaps it will be no easy matter to determine what he does mean. In one view of his publication we are led to conclude that he thinks the assembly of the people is the constitution; for he says the French constitution puts the legislative before the executive; by which he must mean, if he means any thing, that the national assembly is the constitution. But then again, in another place, he says, "The present national assembly of France is, strictly speaking, the personal social compact." That is, the persons assembling together for the purpose of compacting are the compact. Is the Constitutional Society enlightened with the same philosophical derangement of illumination as Pain? Do they also think the agent to be the act, the constituent to be the constitution, and the compacting parties to be the compact? If they do, we must not attempt to reason with persons who are thus illuminated.

Very certain it is that, antecedent to a constitution, there must be something which constitutes; and, in conformity with popular opinions, we will admit it to be an assembly
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of the people, either personally assembled or by their representatives: these, by their concurring suffrages, establish legislative and executive powers to be a constitution for a government which is to be regulated and modified by them; therefore a constitution is derived from the concurring suffrages of a people assembled together; and because this is, or is supposed to be, the case, therefore our constitutional philosophers choose to be of opinion, that where the people have not been recently assembled together for the purpose of framing a constitution, there no constitution exists: upon no other principle can the conduct of the French be accounted for; neither upon any other principle can we conceive an apology for the proceedings of our clubs here in England. To be sure they must imagine that no constitution can exist any where, except it were of yesterday's formation; and, in imitation of the French, that no constitution can be framed till the people are first reduced to a state of savage ferocity and barbarism. Admit we will freely that no constitution exists where no constitution has been formed; but if no constitution exists except it be of yesterday's formation, then

will there be no constitution any where in the world, excepting Holland and America; for what has happened in Poland certainly is not the first formation of a constitution; and what is projecting in France at this present moment is nothing but a wild chaotic jumble of real and imaginary elements, the destruction of a constitution rather than the formation of one; and what the end will be, it is impossible to foresee.

A constitution, politically considered, necessarily supposes a government, and an existing government as necessarily presupposes a constitution of which it is the offspring; therefore, wherever there is an existing government, there by necessity must be a constitution; whether good or bad, is not the question: if good, it needs no amendment; if bad, either through some defect in its first formation, or through any deviation from its origin, it may undoubtedly, and indeed it ought to be amended. But he that argues that a constitution which wants amendment is no constitution at all, however he may pride himself in being a philosopher, has no reason to boast of his wisdom.

But Pain urges that the English govern-
ment

ment arose out of a conquest, and therefore that we have no constitution. His words are, "The English government is one of those which arose out of conquest, and not out of society, and consequently it arose over the people; and though it has been much modified from the opportunity of circumstances since the time of William the Conqueror, this country never yet has regenerated itself, and is therefore without a constitution." The answer to this is, that the English government did not arise out of a conquest, because there was a government regular and formed (as needs not be proved) long prior to the coming over of the Duke of Normandy; that William the First did not become a king of England by conquest, but by right, as the appointed successor of King Edward; that king Edward had notified to him that he was to be his successor, as *Ordericus Vitalis* informs us, *Primo per Robertum Cant. Summum Pontificem, postea per eundem Harul dum, integram Anglici regni Mandaverat concessionem ipsumque* CONCEDENTIBUS ANGLIS, *fecerat totius juris sui hæredem.* And upon the principle of his having a legal title, William justified his claim to the crown in the answer which

he returned to Harold, who demanded of him on what ground he invaded England; and the same language he used constantly after he was in possession of the crown, never grounding his title to the kingdom on conquest, but always on his inheritance of consanguinity, and on his being the adopted heir of the kingdom; and when at any time he is called conqueror, it never is by reason of his having conquered the people of England, but on account of his having conquered the usurper Harold. A conquest of the people of England was wholly unnecessary, as they made no opposition to him, and indeed themselves had invited him to come and take possession of the crown, which Harold had usurped: and William the First was no more a conqueror of the people of England than William the Third was; both were invited over by the people, both governed by the voluntary submission of the people, and according to the established laws of the realm, which were solemnly ratified in the instance of the Norman William in the fourth year of his reign. Therefore Pain and his comrades appear to be as completely ignorant of the origin of the English government, as they are of what is or is not a constitution.

a constitution. Not better informed is Pain, when he tells his reader, p. 84, that "The parliament in England, in both its branches, was erected by patents from the descendants of the Conqueror." But if this was the case, then was England an entire stranger to parliaments till long after the reign of William the First, which he must be ignorant indeed who does not know to be altogether false. Long before the reign of the descendants of William, and long before the reign of even William himself, were parliaments known in England; not indeed with the formalities of the present day, but with the same essential properties of parliament, as might be evidenced in a great variety of instances, were there any occasion in a matter of such general notoriety: therefore let one only instance suffice; it is curious, but little known, and well authenticated, of a parliament holden at Shifford, in the county of Oxford, in the days of Alfred the Great. The account of it is given in a manuscript in Sir Robert Cotten's library, in the following terms:

At Syppond reten Danen manie, sele Biscop, et sele Bocleped Eples prude, et Cnihter egloche. ðen par Eples Elfric of ðe lage
rmuth

ƿmuch ƿire, 7 ec Alƿred Englehiȝd, Engle
deþing, on Englaȝd he ƿaȝ Cýȝg, hem he ȝan
lepen, ƿƿo hi hepen miȝten hu hi hepe liȝ le-
den ƿcolden.

In English thus: *There sat at Shifford many
Thanes, many Bishops, and many learned men,
wise Earls, and awful Knights. There was
Earl Elfrick, very learned in the law, and
Alfred, England's herdsman, England's dar-
ling; he was king of England; he taught them
that could hear him how they should live.*

The manuscript as referred to by Dr.
Plot in his History of Oxfordshire, ed. 1677,
fol. 22; and the translation is given in Dr.
Plot's own words.

Here then was a parliament holden almost
200 years before what is called the conquest,
consisting of all the various orders of the king-
dom, assembled together with their king;
and therefore Pain affirms what is not true,
when he tells his reader that the English
parliament was *erected* by patents from the
descendants of the Conqueror. Whether the
manuscript above specified is still in being, I
know not. If by any good fortune it should
have been one of those which escaped when
so many others perished, it may still be seen
in the British Museum.

In

In confirmation of the truth of the above manuscript, the reader is to be informed, that the remembrance of this parliament is still preserved at Shifford by a name being given to the spot whereon it was holden, which from that event is to this day called the *Court Close*. There is moreover one of the common fields in the neighbourhood of Shifford which, from the same event, is called the *Kinsea* or *Kinsley Field*.

Before the days of Alfred the assemblies of the people used to be tumultuous, and without any order or regularity; but this wise prince taught those who could hear him how they ought to live; that they ought to regulate themselves by wisdom, and some certain and standard rule; that in their assemblies their chief object ought to be the public good, and that men of all orders ought to contribute their endeavours towards it; and for this purpose he convened all the various orders in his kingdom, Thanes, Earls, Knights, &c. to meet him at Shifford. From this venerable then, but at present forsaken spot, issued the first dawnings of the English government (in a meeting of the king with his people in their several ranks and orders),
which

which from that time went on meliorating and receiving improvements through various successions of ages, till it received its final completion and establishment at the revolution.

It may be difficult perhaps to ascertain the precise year in which this parliament was holden, somewhere, most probably, between the years 872 and 880. University College, in Oxford, I believe dates its foundation from the year 872, and of course it may be supposed that the parliament at Shifford, which place is in the neighbourhood of Oxford, was nearly about the same time. Of this, however, we have no certainty; nor indeed is it at all material whether we have or not; certain we are of the manuscript, and certain likewise that places at or near Shifford are, and have been from time immemorial denominated, as hath been already mentioned, and evidently from the event of Alfred's parliament. The Court Close must indisputably have been so denominated from some court having been holden there at some period; but at no period have we any account of a court at Shifford other than what this manuscript gives us an account of in the days
of

of Alfred ; and it is material to observe, that the constant tradition of the country has been, that the Court Close was so called because *the first court that ever was held in England was held there.* Therefore at Shifford is the venerable spot from whence originated our liberties, our parliaments, and every thing that is most dear to us in our invaluable constitution. The ancient church at Shifford whilst it remained standing bore strong marks of a very remote antiquity ; it was situated within what is called the Court Close, and it is no unreasonable conjecture to suppose that it was first erected in consequence of, and in commemoration of this venerable assembly. A few years since, by the neglect of the parishioners (a neglect not uncommon in almost all parishes), a part of it fell, and by their still further neglect, it became so entirely ruinous, that it admitted not of being repaired ; so that this respectable monument of antiquity, and of the religion of our forefathers, was taken down, and a new structure has been erected in its room. Tradition says, and I think it is taken notice of by Dr. Plot, that Shifford was heretofore a place of so much consequence, that it had no fewer
than

than seventeen parish churches belonging to it, but at present there remains scarcely the smallest vestige of any of them; such strange effects are brought about by the revolution of ages. Strange indeed! Tyre, which was once the queen of nations, is now become a forsaken rock, resorted to only by a few solitary fishermen. And Shifford, which in the annals of this kingdom should have had the chiefest place, is now such a deserted depopulated spot, that scarcely any man passeth that way. The night Raven and the Bittern, and birds of solitude, chiefly take up their melancholy abode there; and the place where Alfred first laid the foundation of the English government, is scarcely ever passed over but by the resident farmer and his family, or by the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages, when the countryman plods his way to the church at the exile sound of two small bells; he passeth over it with a careless step, nothing troubling himself about the transactions of former ages; but were it possible for such an one to feel by the recollection of ages by-gone, how must his bosom be warmed by the fire of patriotism, as often as he traceth over with his footsteps the place where

Alfred

Alfred first laid the foundation of his and his country's happiness. That man (says the sage Johnson) is little to be envied, whose patriotism would not gain force upon the plains of *Marathon*, or whose piety would not grow warmer among the ruins of *Iona*. And frigid indeed must be the indifference of that Englishman, who, enjoying the full effects and blessings of the best constitution in the world, could treat with slight or neglect the remembrance of the person from whom, or the spot on which, they first originated. The age, in general, has of late been fond of erecting monuments, and of commemorating events of very little real consequence; but here is an opportunity of commemorating an event in which the ages, yet unborn, will be interested, an event which dissipates like smoke before the wind the suggestions of revolution and constitutional clubs, and of those philosophical fanatics who tell us that the parliament in England, in both its branches, was erected by patents from the descendants of the conqueror. Parliaments have been known in England ever since the English have been combined into one people. First begun, doubtless, when that event first happened

pened under Ethelwolf, but evidently convened and acting as a parliament by legislation under their great and good king Alfred. Let us hear no more, therefore, of those slanders which are cast upon the parliament of England, as if it was the tool, the servile dependant upon the will of a conqueror; as if it had no existence but what was given it as a boon by the descendants of a Norman king. But as we are advocates for the rights and privileges of our kings, so let us be jealous for the honour of our parliaments, whose antiquity is dated from, and hath kept pace with, the constitution, with those legislative and executive powers, which are so admirably blended in the king, the lords spiritual and temporal, and the representatives of the common people, from which happy temperament flow all the blessings of the English government.

The constitution of England began with what is its constitution at the present day, with the legislative and executive powers, vested in the king, the lords spiritual and temporal, and representatives of the people. The parliament of England is coeval with the constitution; and if it had not all its rights
and

and privileges defined and ascertained in its first origin with the same degree of accuracy as they have been since, this is no proof that parliaments did not exist till they were so defined and ascertained, but the contrary, since the ascertaining the rights and privileges of parliaments in latter times is demonstration of their having existed before. This therefore is sufficient to shew the extreme futility and falsehood of Pain's assertion, when he says, that the parliament in England was erected in both its branches by patents from the descendants of the conqueror.

From the days of Alfred certainly parliaments have been known in England; from the days of Alfred the constitution of England hath continued to this present day; and it is now become the unrivalled glory of Englishmen, and the admiration and envy of the whole world. If it hath any defects, it were to be wished it had them not. If any thing can be added to its excellence, any thing that can promote its stability and permanence, by all means let it be effected: but while we attempt to add, let us take care that we do not in a much greater degree detract from its excellence; and while we attempt to

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strengthen,

strengthen, let us take heed that we do not weaken, or perhaps totally destroy, the foundations. In the most beautiful paintings of the best and most admired masters of antiquity, an accurate observer still perceives some defects which he could wish were not there: but where, among the most excellent of modern artists, could one be found bold enough to attempt the removal of them? Fear, in proportion to his own excellence, would restrain his hand from the attempt, and he would be content to consider their defects merely as foils calculated to increase his admiration of their superior beauties. It is thus all good and wise men think and act with regard to the English constitution. They pretend not that it hath no defect or imperfection: it is human; and therefore it hath the common lot of every thing that is human. But, framed as it hath been by the venerable hand of ages, it would require a hand that is more than human to remove its imperfection. The removal of its imperfection would be to render it perfect, but such no human work can be: therefore, let us rest contented with it as it is, in the enjoyment of that liberty and those blessings which

it affords in such abundance, and which renders the happiness of Englishmen so much superior to what the other nations of the world enjoy: blessings founded on and derived to us from the wisdom of ages, and which we may with assurance say, the innovating spirit of modern philosophy can never improve, for modern philosophy is not wisdom.

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